















AN  
ESTIMATE  
OF THE  
COMPARATIVE STRENGTH  
OF  
GREAT BRITAIN;  
AND OF THE  
LOSSES OF HER TRADE,  
FROM EVERY WAR, SINCE THE REVOLUTION;  
WITH  
AN INTRODUCTION  
OF  
PREVIOUS HISTORY.

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A NEW EDITION,  
CORRECTED, AND CONTINUED, TO  
1810.

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BY GEORGE CHALMERS, F.R.S. S.A.  
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T H E

## P R E F A C E.

**D**URING the struggles of a great nation, for her safety, or renown, conjunctures often arise, when the person, whose station does not admit of his giving advice, ought to offer his informations. The present seemed to be such a time. And the Compiler of the following sheets, having collected various documents, with regard to the national resources, thought it his duty to make an humble tender to the public of that authentic intelligence, which, amidst the wailings of despondency, had brought conviction, and comfort, to his own mind.

Little have they studied the theory of man, or observed his familiar life, who have not remarked, that the individual finds the highest gratification, in deploring the felicities of the past, even amidst the pleasures of the present. Prompted, thus, by

temper, he has, in every age, complained of its decline, and depopulation, while the world was the most populous, and its affairs the most prosperous.

The reader, who honours the following sheets, with an attentive perusal, may probably find, that though we have advanced, by wide steps, during the last century, in the science of politics, we have still much to learn; and that the summit can only be gained, by substituting accurate research, for delusive speculation, and rejecting zeal of paradox, for moderation of opinion.

Mankind are now too enlightened to admit of confident assertion, in the place of satisfactory proof, or plausible novelty, for conclusive evidence. He, consequently, who proposes new modes of argument, must expect contradiction, and he, who draws novel conclusions, from uncommon premises, ought to enable the reader to examine his reasonings; because it is just inquiry, which can alone establish the certainty of truth on the degradation of error: And little is, therefore, asserted, in the following sheets, without the citation of sufficient authorities, or the mention of authentic documents, which it is now proper to explain.

As early as the reign of James I. ingenuity exerted its powers to discover, through the thick cloud,  
which

which then enveloped an interesting subject, the value of our exports, and of our imports; and from their notices, by an easy deduction, to find, whether we were gainers, or losers, by our traffic. Diligent inquirers looked into the entries at the custom-house, as they knew, that since a duty of five in the hundred was collected on the value of commodities, which were sent out, and brought in, it would require no difficult calculation, to ascertain nearly the amount of both. And, during that reign, it was established as a rule, not only among merchants, but statesmen, to multiply the general value of the customs, inwards and outwards, by twenty, in order to find the true amount of the various articles, which formed the aggregate of our foreign trade.

Exceptionable as this mode was, it furnished, through several years of darkness, the only light, that our ancestors had to direct their inexperienced steps, notwithstanding the impatience of politicians, and the efforts of ministers. It is difficult to induce the old to alter the modes of their youth. When the committee of the privy council for trade, urged the commissioners of the customs, about the end of Charles II.'s reign—"to enter the several commodities, which formed the exports, and imports; to affix to each its usual price; and to form a general total, by calculating the value of the whole,"—the custom-house officers insisted,—“that, to comply with such directions, would require one half of the

clerks of London.”—And the theorists of those times continued to satisfy their curiosity, and to alarm the nation, on the side of her commercial jealousy; since there existed no written evidence, by which their statements could be proved, or their declamations confuted.

It was to the liberality, no less than to the perseverance, of the House of Peers, that the public were at last indebted, in 1696, for the establishment of the Inspector-General of the Imports and Exports, and for *the Custom-house Ledger*, which contains the particulars, and value of both; and which forms, therefore, the most useful record, with regard to Trade, that any country possesses.

From this authentic register, the parliament was yearly supplied with details, either for argument, or deliberation, and speculatists were furnished with extracts, for the exercise of their ingenuity, or the formation of their projects. It is from this commercial register, that *the value of cargoes exported*, which will be so often mentioned in this work, was also taken.

But, as actual enjoyment seldom ensures continued satisfaction, what had been demanded, for a century, when it was regarded as unattainable, was ere long derided, as defective, when it was possessed. And theorists, who pointed out the defects of an establishment,



establishment, that could not be made perfect, found many believers, because men's pride is gratified, by seeing imperfection in all things. The office of Inspector-General was greatly improved, and energized, during the first administration of Mr. Pitt.

When the committee of Peers originally affixed the price, whereby each article of export, and import, should in future be rated, they probably knew, that the successive fluctuation of demand, arising from the change of fashion, would necessarily raise the value of some articles, and sink the price of others; but, that the same fluctuation of taste, which, in one age, occasioned an apparent error, would, in the next, re-establish the rule. Nor, did the Peers probably expect to ascertain the real value of the exports, or of imports, during the current year; as the prodigious extent of the calculation did not admit of a speedy deduction. But, they aimed, with a laudable spirit, to establish a standard, whereby a just comparison might be made, between any two given periods of the past; and thereby to infer, whether our manufactures, and commerce, prospered, or declined, prior to the current year. This information *the Ledger of the Inspector-General* does certainly convey, with sufficient accuracy, for the uses of practice, or the speculation of theory. The official value of the exports, and imports, has always been supposed to be much under the real value:

from recent experience, we are now able to state the true amount of both. The value of British manufactures, which were exported, was,

	Official Value.		Real Value.
In 1798 - -	£. 19,672,503 - -	£. 33,148,682	
1799 - -	24,084,213 - -	38,942,498	
1800 - -	24,304,284 - -	39,471,203	
1809 - -	35,107,439 - -	50,242,761	

By contrasting, in the following work, the average exports of distant years, we are enabled to trace the rise, the decline, or the progress of traffic, at different periods, even in every year. The Inspector-General, who established that Ledger, in 1696, was William Culliford; who was succeeded, by Dr. Charles Davenant, in 1703. Yet, half informed writers have asserted, that Davenant was the original Inspector-General "who formed those official values, in 1697\*."

\* The books of the late Board of Trade, which are in my keeping, evince, that William Culliford, who had been a custom-house officer, in Ireland, was the *first Inspector-General*, who formed that Ledger in 1696. The Treasury Register proves, that on the 3d of June, 1703, Charles D'Avenant, Esq. was appointed Inspector-General of Exports and Imports, in the room of William Culliford, Esq. appointed a Commissioner of the Customs. We thus see, in the Treasury Record, that D'Avenant was appointed the *second* Inspector-General, at the end of seven years, after the establishment of that office, by Culliford.

It is to the same age, that we owe the establishment of *The register-general of shipping*. The original institution of this office arose from an indefinite clause, in the commission of the customs, during 1701. Thus it continued incidental to the appointment of the Custom-house commissioners, till “the act for the union with Scotland, requiring the then ships of Scots property to be registered, in this office, it was thought fit to give it a distinct establishment, and, at the same time, to extend the account, which was kept before, of all ships trading over-sea, or coastways, in England, to the ships in Scotland\*.”

The same reasons, which had induced the traders to enter at the Custom-house, in respect to their merchandizes, rather too much, incited them, with regard to their vessels, to register the burthen rather too low; as a tonnage duty, they knew, would be often required of them, at many ports: in the first operation, they were governed, by their vanity; in the second, by their interest: and if the one furnishes an evidence too vague, the other gives a testimony too degrading. Thus have we, in the entries of the shipping, at the Custom-house, all the certainty, that the entries of merchandize has been supposed to want. And, in the following work, the quantity of tonnage, rather than the number of ships, has been always stated, at different periods,

\* Charles Godolphin's Memorial to the Treasury, Dec. 1717.

with the value of cargoes which they were supposed to transport, as being the most certain: when to the value of cargoes, the tonnage is added, in the following pages, the reader is furnished with a supplemental proof to the useful notices, which each separately conveys.

Of the tonnage of vessels, which will so often occur, in the subsequent sheets, it must be always remembered, that they do not denote so many distinct ships, which performed so many single voyages: for, it frequently happens, that one vessel enters, and clears, at the Custom-house, several times in one year, as the *colliers* of Whitehaven, and Newcastle: but, these repeated voyages were, in this manner, always made, and will constantly continue; so that, being always included, in the annual tonnage, we are equally enabled, to form a comparative estimate of the advance, or decline, of our navigation, at any two given epochs of the past. It is to be, moreover, remembered, that the British vessels enter at the Custom-house by the registered tons, and not by the measured burden of the ship, which is supposed to be formerly one-third more, so that the reader may in every year, through the following statements, calculate the tonnage at one-third more than the registered tonnage has given it, prior to the year 1786; when the new register-act commenced. The register-act of the late Earl of  
Liverpool



Liverpool has added great certainty to the record of shipping; and consequently has contributed much to the usefulness of the information, which the register of shipping truly conveys.

The office of Inspector-general of imports and exports, for Scotland, was established only, in 1755. And no diligence could procure authentic details of the Scottish commerce, from any other source of genuine information. The blank, which appears in the preceding period, as to the Scottish traffic, sufficiently demonstrates, that imperfect evidence, with regard to an important subject, is preferable to none; as the glimmerings of the faintest dawn is more invigorating than the gloom of total opacity. Connected accounts of the shipping of Scotland cannot be given before 1759; because it is only from this year, that they have been regularly entered at the Custom-house, at least constantly kept. In respect to these, the same allowance must be made for *repeated voyages*, and the same augmentation, for the *real burden*, more than the *registered tonnage*. It is not pretended, that the before-mentioned Custom-house books convey the certainty of demonstration. It is sufficient, that they contain *the best evidence, which the nature of the case admits*.

The subject of population is so intimately connected, with every estimate of the strength of nations,



tions, that the compiler was induced to inquire into the populouſneſs of England, at different periods, from the earlieſt times to the preſent. In this difficult diſcuſſion, men, at once candid, and able, have ſpoke a language, often contradictory to each other, and ſometimes inconſiſtent with their own premiſes.

The Lord Chief Juſtice Hale, and Gregory King, in the ſeventeenth century, and Doctör Campbell and Doctör Price, in the preſent times, maintained opinions directly the reverſe of each other, in reſpect to the queſtion, Whether the people of this iſland have not gradually increaſed, during every age, or ſometimes diminifhed, amid public convulſions, and private miſery? The two firſt—the one a great maſter of the rules of evidence; and the other a ſkilful calculator, have agreed in maintaining the affirmative of that queſtion. Doctör Campbell has laboured to ſhew, that the inhabitants of England diminifhed, in their numbers, under the miſrule of feudal ſovereigns. And Doctör Price has equally contended, that the people have decreaſed, ſince a happier government was introduced at *the Revolution*, and that they continue to decreaſe.

It is propoſed to review, hiſtorically, the ſentiments of each, with deſign rather to aſcertain the authenticity of their facts, than to eſtabliſh or overturn, their ſeveral ſyſtems. The candid inquirer  
may

may perhaps see cause for lamenting, in his progress, that the learned are sometimes too confident, and the unlettered always too credulous. And the same inquirer will have an opportunity, as he advances, of listening to the sentiments of his ancestors, on various topics of legislation, and of observing the condition of different ranks of men, previous to the period, at which *THIS ESTIMATE* properly begins.

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*THIS Estimate* was first published, in 1782. The public approbation has called, successively, for several editions. It has been translated, meanwhile, into the French, the Russian, and other foreign languages. It has furnished comfort to the people, at home, from that year, to the present: and, during that long period, it has impressed upon the minds of other nations high ideas of the opulence, and power, of Great Britain. It also shewed to our writers, on political œconomy, an example of how much importance it is to collect many documents, and of trusting more to the weight of facts, than to the efficacy of words.

It was this *Estimate*, which disclosed to the Public, that, in every war, there is a point of depression, to which the spring of trade may be thrust down, by the force of hostilities; and from which, it invariably rebounds, with augmented force. This consoling discovery was impugned, at the commencement of  
the

the late war. It was not very difficult to prove that, what had always happened would again happen. Experience has now decided the certainty of that very comfortable truth for ever. At the epoch of that controversy, the whole value of our exports was £. 20,390,180, in 1793: the official value of our exports, gradually, rose to £. 43,152,019, in 1800. The experience of the present war, *which has been chiefly directed against commerce*, has added demonstration to certainty: the first effects of real hostilities reduced the amount of our exports, from £. 46,120,962, in 1802, to £. 31,438,495, in 1803: Yet, owing to the energies of our traders, and the necessities of the world, the official value of our exports, which had risen, in 1808, to £. 36,527,184, rose, in 1809, to the unexampled amount of £. 50,301,763, which are equal, in real value to £. 63,000,000 sterling money. He must be a sturdy controvertist, who can out-argue such a demonstration of a truth, which is at once instructive, and comfortable!

In this new edition, the *Chronological Table* has been continued down, by important additions, to the year 1810. Some corrections have been made, and an additional chapter has been added; containing a full discussion of the various topicks, which, during recent times, have attracted notice, by their novelty, and induced inquiry, by their moment.

During

During the war of 1756, Dr. Brakenridge published degrading accounts of our population, which were transcribed into the foreign gazettes. His example was followed by Dr. Price, during the American war. Seeing such doctrines propagated, during two successive wars, by eminent men, I thought I saw, in that coincidence, a settled purpose to enfeeble the nation, at critical periods, in the eyes of foreigners. Dr. Price contended, with more confidence, than knowledge, that the population of England, and Wales, had declined, since the Revolution, till it scarcely amounted to 5,000,000 of souls. I maintained, that our numbers had greatly increased, in that period; and that the population of England, and Wales, in 1793, was 8,447,200 souls. The late enumeration has demonstrated, that there has been an increase, since the Revolution, of more than 2,840,000 people; and that the number of souls, in England and Wales, during the year 1801, was more than 9,340,000. This enumeration, then, has buried the degrading doctrines of Dr. Price, in ever-during discredit.

The question, now, is not, which of the disputants were right; but, which of them, on both those occasions, maintained the *truth*. Experience, has, finally, decided those two national questions. Demonstration will for ever denounce those ill-timed philosophers, who, as they delight, in dissenting from public opinion, take a pleasure, in frightening well-meaning



meaning people with groundless apprehensions! But, it doth not beseem, faith Knolles, this most wealthy state to be terrified, from that which is right, with any charges of war :—

“ The British Navy, through Ocean vast,

“ Shall wave her double Crofs t’ extremeſt climes,

“ Terrifick.”——



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CHAP. I.

*General Observations upon the Causes, physical, and moral, which influence Population, in every Country.—The Populousness, Commerce, and Power, of England, prior to the Demise of Edward III.—The Number of People, 1377.—Reflections.*

OF the existing numbers of Mankind, in successive ages of the world, various writers have given dissimilar accounts ; because they did not always acknowledge the same facts, nor often adopt the same principles, in their most ingenious disquisitions.

The Lord Chief Justice Hale \* formerly, and Sir James Stuart †, and the Count de Buffon, lately,

\* In his *Primitive Origination of Mankind Considered*.

† In his *Political Oeconomy*.

considered men, as urged, like other animals, by natural instincts ; as directed, like them, by the same motives of propagation ; and as subsisted afterwards, or destroyed, by similar means.

It is instinct, then, which, according to those illustrious authors, is the cause of procreation ; but it is food, that keeps population full, and accumulates numbers. The force of the first principle, we behold in the multitudes, whether of the fish of the sea, the fowls of the air, or the beasts of the field, which are yearly produced : we perceive, however, the essential consequence of the last, from the vast numbers, that annually perish for want.

Experience, indeed, evinces, to what an immense extent domestic animals may be multiplied, by providing abundance of food. In the same manner, mankind have been found to exist, and increase, in every condition, and in every age, according to the standard of their subsistence, and to the measure of their comforts.

Hence, Mr. Hume justly concludes \*, that if we would bring to some determination the question, concerning the populousness of ancient, and modern, times, it will be requisite to compare the *domestic* and *political* situations of the two periods, in order to judge of the facts by their moral causes ; because, if every thing else be equal, it seems reasonable to expect, that where there are the wisest

\* In his Essays, Vol. I. Essay xi. On the Populousness of Ancient Nations.



institutions, and the most happiness, there will also be the most people.

Let us run over the history of England, then, with a view to those reasonings, and to this truth.

Settled probably about a thousand years before the birth of Christ, England was found, on the arrival of J. Cæsar, to contain a *great multitude of people*. But this *observant author* transmitted notices, with regard to the modes of life, which prevailed among those, whom he came to conquer, whence we may judge of their numbers, with greater certainty, than from the accuracy of his language, or the weight of his authority. And he submits to our judgment sufficient *data*, when he informs us, that the inhabitants of the inland country subsisted, by feeding of flocks, while their neighbours along the shores of the ocean were maintained, by the more productive labours of agriculture.

Having already arrived, some of the tribes in the second, and others of them in the third stage of society, in its progress to refinement, the Britons were soon taught the arts of manufacture, and the pursuits of commerce, by their civilizing conquerors. A people, who annually employed eight hundred vessels to export the surplus produce of their husbandry, must have exerted great industry, at home, and enjoyed sufficient plenty from it. Roman-Britain, of consequence, must have become extremely populous, when compared with former times, during that long period, from the arrival of the Romans, 55 years before the birth of Christ,

to the abdication of their government, in 446 of our æra\*.

From this event, commenced a war of six hundred years continuance, if we calculate, the settlement of the Saxons, the ravages of the Danes, and the conquest of the Normans. A course of hostilities, thus lengthened beyond example, and wasteful above description, changed completely the political condition of the people, by involving them in ages of wretchedness. It was to those causes owing, that the inhabitants became divided, at the epoch of *The Conquest*, into five several classes: the barons, the free tenants, the free soccagers, together with the villains, and the slaves, who formed the great body of the people †.

A consideration of the foregoing events, it probably was, with the wretched condition of every order of men, which induced the Lord Chief Justice Hale, and Mr. Gregory King, to agree in asserting ‡, “that the people of England, at the arrival of the Normans, might be somewhat “above *two million*.” And the notices of that most instructive record, the *Domesday Book*, seem to justify the conjectures of both, by exhibiting satisfactory proofs of a very scanty population, at

\* See Mr. Whitaker’s most excellent History of Manchester, vol. i. which gives the best account of the British and Roman-British period of our Annals.

† Id.

‡ Origination of Mankind; and Davenant’s Works.

that memorable epoch, in the country, as well as in the towns\*.

The annals of England, from the epoch of the Conquest to the date of the Great Charter [from 1066 to 1215] are filled with revolutions in the government, and insurrections of the people; with domestic ravages, and foreign war; with frequent famines, and their attendant pestilence.

Doct<sup>r</sup> Campbel has enumerated † various circumstances to demonstrate the unhappiness of the nation, during those times, which were equally ferocious, and unsettled; and, by necessary consequence, to show the constant decline of their numbers.

Few revolutions, said he, even when atchieved by the most wasteful conquerors, appear to have been attended with so sudden a revolution, both of property and of power, as that which William I. unhappily introduced into England. The constitution, from being limited, and free, became at once arbitrary and severe. While the ancient

\* In Mr. Whitaker's admirable History of Manchester, vol. ii. p. 345—354, there is a very curious table of the rates, for most of the necessaries of life, both at home and abroad, in the seventh, eighth, tenth, and eleventh centuries; whereby it appears, that such necessaries were much dearer formerly than at present; and that most things were in those ages much dearer at home than abroad. It is apparent, then, that though we are often imposed upon by the denominations of money, the great body of the people did not live so comfortably in those good old times.

† Political Survey, 2 vol. ch. iii.

nobility seemed to be annihilated, the Saxon people were assuredly reduced to villainage. And those revolts ensued successively, which necessarily arise, when a gallant people are despised, at the same time that they are oppressed. The Conqueror, urged partly by revenge, perhaps more by policy, was provoked, by the insurrection of the northern counties, to prescribe remedies, as severe as they were barbarous. He so effectually depopulated the extensive country from *the Humber* to *the Tees*, that it lay for years uncultivated, whereby multitudes perished for want. The pleasures of *William* too were as destructive to the people as his anger. In forming the New Forest, he laid waste an extent of thirty miles in Hampshire, without regarding the cries of villagers, or the sacredness of churches. And his gratitude to his supporters, though attended with less violence, produced, in the end, consequences still more fatal, with regard to the depopulation of England, than had resulted either from his resentment, or his sport. He distributed the whole kingdom to about seven hundred of his principal officers, who afterwards divided among their followers the spoils of the vanquished, on such precarious tenures, as secured the submission of the lower orders, though not their happiness.

The Conqueror's measures, thus harshly executed, continued to influence all ranks of men, long after the terrors of his government had ceased; and while they neither secured the quiet, nor promoted



moted the plenty of the nation, his rigours probably added very few to its numbers.

The great charter of John made no alteration in public law, nor any innovation in private rights: and though it conferred additional security on the free, it gave little freedom to the slave. Yet, the barbarous licence both of kings, and nobles, being thenceforth somewhat restrained, government, says Mr. Hume\*, approached by degrees nearer to that end, for which it was instituted, the equal protection of every order in the state.

This general reasoning, however just, did not impose on the sagacity of Dr. Campbel, who minutely examined† every circumstance, in our subsequent annals, that tended either to retard, or promote, an effective population. He found no event in the long reign of Henry III. filled as it was with distraction, proceeding from weakness, and with civil war, the result of turbulence, which could have added one man to our numbers. Though historians have celebrated the following reigns of our Edwards, as the most glorious in our annals; yet, he remarked, that, during a period, wherein there were scarcely ten years of peace, the eclat of victories, the splendour of triumphs, or the acquisition of distant territories, did not compensate the loss of inhabitants, who continually decreased, from the waste of foreign, and civil, wars,

\* In his History.

† In his Political Survey, 2 vol. ch. iii.



and from the debility of pestilential distempers, arising from a wretched husbandry, as much as from a noxious state of the atmosphere. It was a shrewd remark of Major Graunt \*, when he was reflecting over “ *the sickliness, the healthfulness, and fruitfulness, of seasons,*” that “ *the more sickly the years are, the less fruitful of children they also be* †.”

The first notice, which the Parliament seem to have taken of the paucity of inhabitants, may be seen in the *Statute of Labourers*, that was enacted in 1349. This law recites—“ That whereas a great part of the people, and especially of workmen and servants, late died of the pestilence, many, seeing the necessity of masters and great scarcity of servants, will not serve, unless they receive excessive wages, some being rather willing to beg in idleness, than by labour to get their living:” Considering, therefore, “ the grievous incommodities which of the lack, especially of ploughmen and such labourers, may hereafter come,” Edward III. with the assistance of the *prelates*, the *nobles*, and the *learned men*, ordained a variety of regulations, which were unjust in their theory, and violent in their execution ‡. This edict of the King, and his council,

\* In his *Observations on the Bills of Mortality*, 1662.

† There were no fewer than one-and-twenty *dearths* and *famines* from 1069 to 1355. See a Collection of the most remarkable dearths and famines, published by Edward Howe, in 1631.

‡ These regulations may be seen in Cay’s Collection of Statutes, vol. i. p. 261—3; and sufficiently prove to what a deplorable

council, was enforced by the legislature, in the subsequent year—"on the petition of the commonalty, that the said servants, having no regard to the said ordinance, but to their ease and singular covetise, do withdraw to serve great men and other, *unless they have wages and living to the double and treble of that they were wont to take the twentieth year of the king that now is.*"

Yet, after adjusting minutely the prices of labour, of natural products, and even of manufactures, the statute of the 23d Edward III. directed, "that the artificers should be sworn to use their crafts as they did in the twentieth year of the same king\*" [1346], under the penalty of imprisonment, at the discretion of the Justices. The Parliament busied themselves, year after year, in regulating labour, which had been defrauded of its

deplorable state of slavery the collective mass of the people was then reduced. "Every able-bodied person under sixty years of age, not having sufficient to live on, being required, shall be bound to serve him that doth require him, or else shall be committed to gaol, till he finds security to serve. If a servant, or workman, depart from service before the time agreed upon, he shall be imprisoned. If any artificer take more wages than were wont to be paid, he shall be committed to gaol." The severity of these penalties was soon greatly increased by the 34th Edward III. which directs, "That if any labourer or servant flee to any town, the chief officer shall deliver him up: and if they depart to another county, they shall be burnt in the forehead with the letter F." Thus, says Anderson, they lived, till manufactures drove slavery away.

Chron. Ac. of Com. v. i. p. 204.

\* Chap. I. ~~1346~~ 7.

just reward, by considerable defalcations from the coin\*. During an administration less active, and vigorous, and respected, than Edward's, such regulations had produced tumult, and revolt. Scarcely indeed was that great monarch laid in his grave, when the confirmation of the same statutes, by his feeble successor, gave rise to the memorable rebellion of Tyler and Straw, which was so destructive in its immediate effects, yet proved so beneficial in its ultimate consequences! The common people acquired implied liberty from insurrection, while the Parliament were enacting †, "*that forced manumissions should be considered as void.*" And such are the revolutions, which insensibly take place, during ages of darkness, before the eyes of chroniclers, who are carried away by the sound of words, without regarding the efficacy of things.

The declamatory recitals of such statutes ought generally to be regarded as slight proofs of the authenticity of facts, unless where they are supported, by collateral circumstances. From the reiterated debasement of the coin, which proceeded from the expensive wars of Edward III. we might be apt to infer, that the recited destruction of the

\* From the value of *the pound*, or twenty shillings in present money, as established by Edward I. in 1300, there were deducted by Edward III. in the 18th of his reign, 4*s.* 11*d.*  $\frac{1}{4}$ , and in the 20th of his reign, 9*d.*  $\frac{3}{4}$ , more; so that there had been taken no less than five shillings and nine pence from the standard pound, as settled in 1300, of £. 2. 17*s.* 5*d.*

Harris on Coins, part ii. ch. i.

† By the 5th Richard II.

pestilence was merely a pretence to palliate motives of avarice, or to justify the rigours of oppression.

On the other hand, Doctor Mead assures us, that the greatest mortality, which has happened in later ages, was about the middle of the fourteenth century; when the plague that seized England, Scotland, and Ireland, in 1349, *is said* to have dispeopled the earth of *more than half* of its inhabitants\*. The Commons petitioned, during the Parliament † of 1364, that, in consideration of the preceding pestilence, the King would allow persons, who held lands of him in chief, to let leases without a licence, as had been lately practised, *till the country were become more populous*. From the 23d of Edward I. when the cities and boroughs are said to have been first formally summoned to Parliament, to the demise of Edward IV. the sheriffs often returned, *That there were no cities, or boroughs, in their counties, whence representatives could be sent*. This form of expression Doctor Brady ‡ has very justly explained to mean, That the towns were so depopulated and poor, as to be unable to pay the accustomed expences of delegates. The truth of that representation, and of this commentary, seems to be confirmed by

\* Discourse concerning Pest. Contag. p. 24—5.

† Cott. Abt. of Records, p. 97.

‡ Of Boroughs, p. 125, &c.



a law of Henry VII.\*; which recites, That where, in some towns, two hundred persons lived by their lawful labours, now they are occupied by two or three herdsmen, and the residue fall into idleness. And, from the foregoing facts we may surely infer, that there must have been a great paucity of people in England, during those *good old times*, at least towards the conclusion of the celebrated reign of Edward III.

From incontrovertible evidence we can now establish the whole number of inhabitants, at that epoch, with sufficient exactness to answer all the practical purposes of the statesman, and even to satisfy all the scrupulous doubts of the sceptic. A poll-tax of four-pence, having been imposed by the Parliament of the 51st of Edward III. (1377) on every *lay* person, as well male as female, of *fourteen* years and upwards, real mendicants only excepted, there remains an official return of the persons who paid the tax, in each county, city, and town, which has been happily preserved †. And, from this  
*subsidy-*

\* 4th Henry VII. ch. 19; which is published in the Appendix to Pickering's Statutes, vol. xxiii.

† This record, so instructive as to the state of England at the demise of Edward III. was laid before the Antiquary Society, in December 1784, by the late Mr. Topham of the Paper-Office; a gentleman, whose curious research, with regard to the jurisprudence, and history of his country, as well as communicative disposition, merits the greatest praise. Mr. Topham observed, that the sum collected, in consequence of the  
subsidy



*subsidy-roll* it appears, that the *lay* persons, who paid the before-mentioned poll-tax, amounted to - - - - - 1,367,239.

When we have ascertained what proportion the persons paying bore to *the whole*, we shall be able to form a sufficient estimate of the total population. It appears from the table formed by Doctor Halley, according to the Breslaw births and burials; from the Northampton Table; from the Norwich Table; and from the London Table, constructed by Mr. Simpson; as these Tables are published by Doctor Price\*; That the persons at any time living *under* fourteen years of age are a good deal fewer than *one-third* of the co-existing lives. And the *lay* persons, who paid the tax in 1377, must consequently have been a *good deal more than two-thirds* of the whole.

But, since there may have been omis-

sions of the persons paying	-	-	1,367,239
add a half	-	-	683,619
<hr/>			
			2,050,858

subsidy of 1377, being £. 22,607. 2s. 8d. contained only 1,356,428 groats, which ought to have been the amount of those, who were fourteen years of age and upwards. But I have chosen to state the number of persons, who are mentioned in the roll as having paid, in each county and town, amounting to 1,367,239, though the total mistakingly added on the record is 1,376,442.

\* Observ. on Revers. Payments, vol. ii. p. 35—6, 39—40.

Brought over	-	2,050,858
Add the number of beneficed clergy		
paying the tax	- - -	15,229
And the non-beneficed clergy	-	13,932
		<hr/>
		2,080,019
But Wales, not being included in this		
roll, is placed on a footing with		
Yorkshire*, at	- - -	196,560
Cheshire, and Durham, having had		
their own receivers, do not appear		
on the roll; the first is ranked with		
Cornwall, at	- - -	51,411
The second with Northumberland, at		25,213
		<hr/>
The whole people of England and		
Wales	- - -	2,353,203
		<hr/>

\* From Davenant's Table (in his Essay on Ways and Means, p. 76.) it appears, that Wales paid a much smaller sum to the poll-tax of the 1st of William and Mary, to the quarterly poll, and indeed to every other tax, and contained a much lower number of houses, according to the hearth-books of Lady-day 1690, than Yorkshire. It was giving a very large allowance to Wales, when this country was placed on an equality with Yorkshire, which paid, in 1377, for 131,040 lay persons. The population of Cheshire, and Durham, was settled upon similar principles; and is equally stated in the text at a medium rather too high. So that, as far as we can credit this authentic record, in respect to the whole number of lay persons upwards of fourteen years of age, we must believe, that this kingdom contained at the demise of Edward III. about TWO MILLIONS, three hundred and fifty-three thousand souls; making a reasonable allowance for the usual omissions of taxable persons.

We can now build upon a rock ; having before us proofs, which are almost equal in certainty to actual enumerations. Yet, what a picture of public misrule, and private misery, does the foregoing statement display, during an unhappy period of three hundred years ! We here behold the powerful operation of those causes of depopulation, which Doctor Campbell collected, in order to support his hypothesis of a decreasing population, in *feudal times*. But, were we to admit, that one half of the people had been carried off by the desolating plague of 1349, as Doctor Mead supposes ; or even one-third, as Mr. Hume represents with greater probability ; we should find abundant reason to admire the solidity of Lord Hale's argument, in favour of a progressive population ; because this circumstance would alone evince, that there had been, in that long effluxion of time, a considerable increase of numbers, during various years of healthiness, and in different ages of tranquility.

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## CHAP. II.

*The Population in the principal Towns of England, during 1377. Reflections. The Populousness, Commerce, Policy, and Power of England, from that Epoch to the Accession of Elizabeth.*

THE truth of Lord Hale's conclusion, with regard to a progressive increase of people, would appear still more evident, if we were to form a comparison between the notices of Domesday Book, and the statements of the Subsidy-roll before-mentioned, which would show a much inferior populousness, soon after *the Conquest*, in 1077, than at the demise of Edward, in 1377.

We shall certainly find additional proofs, and perhaps some amusement, from taking a view of the population of our principal towns, as they were found, and are represented, by the tax gatherers, in 1377.

London paid for	-	23,314	lay	persons; and
contained consequently about	-	34,971	souls.	
York, for	-	7,248	-	10,872
Bristol, for	-	6,345	-	9,517
Plymouth, for	-	4,837	-	7,255
Coventry, for	-	4,817	-	7,225
				Norwich,

Norwich,* for	-	-	3,952	-	5,928
Lincoln, for	-	-	3,412	-	5,118
Sarum, (Wilts) for	-	-	3,226	-	4,839
Lynn, for	-	-	3,127	-	4,690
Colchester, for	-	-	2,955	-	4,432
Beverley, for	-	-	2,663	-	3,994
Newcastle on Tyne, for	-	-	2,647	-	3,970
Canterbury, for	-	-	2,574	-	3,861
St. Edmonsbury, for	-	-	2,442	-	3,663
Oxford, for	-	-	2,357	-	3,535
Glocester, for	-	-	2,239	-	3,358
Leicester, for	-	-	2,101	-	3,151
Salop, for	-	-	2,082	-	3,123

The foregoing, are the only towns, which, in 1377, paid the poll-tax of a groat, for more than two thousand lay persons, of fourteen years of age, and upwards. And their inconsiderableness exhibits a marvellous depopulation, in the country, and a lamentable want of manufactures, and of commerce, every where, in England. The state of Scotland was still more wretched, with regard to all these. Domesday Book represents our cities to have been little superior to villages, at the Conquest †, and

\* Dr. Price talked of Norwich having been a great city formerly. The Domesday Book shews sufficiently the diminutiveness of our towns in 1077: and Mr. Topham's Subsidy Roll puts an end to conjecture, with regard to the populousness of any of them, anterior to 1377.

† See Brady on Boroughs.



much more inconsiderable, than they certainly were, at the demise of Edward III.

The informations of contemporary writers, would, nevertheless, lead us to consider those early reigns, as times of overflowing populousness. Amidst all that depopulation, Edward III. is said to have suddenly collected, in 1360, a hundred thousand men, whom he transported, in eleven hundred vessels, to France\*. It did not, however, escape the sagacity of Mr. Hume, when he reflected on the high pay of the soldiers, that the numerous armies, which are mentioned by the historians of those days, consisted chiefly of ragamuffins, who followed the camp for plunder. In 1382, the rebels, says Daniel †, suddenly marched towards London, under Wat. Tyler, and Jack Straw, and mustered on Blackheath, sixty thousand strong, or, as others say, an hundred thousand. In 1415, Henry V. invaded France with a fleet of sixteen hundred sail‡, and fifty thousand combatants, who, not long after, won the glorious battle of Azincourt. Our history is filled with such instances of vast armies, which had been hastily levied for temporary enterprizes: yet, we ought not thence to infer, that the country was overstocked with inhabitants. This truth is extremely apparent, from the statute of the 9th Henry V. which recites, “That whereas, at the

\* Ander. Chron. Ac. of Com. v. i. p. 191.

† History of Richard, in Kennet, p. 245.

‡ And. Chron. Ac. of Com. v. i. p. 245.

“ making

“making of the act of the 14th of Edward III.  
“(1340) there were sufficient of proper men,  
“in each county, to execute every office; but that,  
“owing to pestilence, and wars, there are not now  
“(1421) a sufficiency of responsible persons to  
“act as sheriffs, coroners, and escheators.” The  
laurels, which were gained by Henry V. are well  
known, says the learned observer on the ancient  
statutes; but he hath left us, in the preamble of  
one of his statutes, most irrefragable proof, that  
they were not obtained, but at the dearest price,  
*the depopulation of the country.*

The facility, with which great bodies of men  
were collected, in those early ages, exhibits, then,  
for our instruction, a picture of manners, idle, and  
licentious; and shews only, for our comfort, that  
the most numerous classes of mankind existed in a  
condition, which is not to be envied by those, who,  
in better times, enjoy either health, or ease.

The period from the accession of Henry IV. in  
1399, to the proclamation of Henry VII. in 1485,  
may be regarded as the most disastrous, in our latter  
annals; because, a civil war, remarkable for the  
inveteracy of the leaders, and for the waste of the  
people, began with the one event, and ended with  
the other. Doctor Campbel has collected the *va-  
rious circumstances of depopulation*; tending to prove,  
that the number of inhabitants, which, before the  
bloody contests between the Lancastrians and  
Yorkists began, had been already much lessened,  
was in the end greatly reduced, by a series of the

most destructive calamities. The monuments of more settled times were demolished; the country was laid waste; cities sunk into towns, while towns dwindled into villages: and universal desolation is said to have ensued. Nor, was the condition of the country much meliorated, by the re-establishment of domestic quiet. If, indeed, we could implicitly credit the recitals of the laws of Henry VII. we should find sufficient evidence, "That great desolations daily do increase, by pulling down, and wilful waste of houses, and towns, and by laying to pasture lands, which customably have been used in tillage."

An important change had certainly taken place, meanwhile, in the condition of the great body of the people, which fortunately promoted their happiness; and which consequently proved favourable to the propagation of the species.

There existed in England, at the Conquest, no *free hands*, or freemen, who worked for wages; since the scanty labour of times, warlike and unindustrious, was wholly performed by villains, or by slaves. The latter, who composed a very numerous class, equally formed an object of foreign trade, for ages after the arrival of the Conqueror, who only prohibited the sale of them to infidels\*. But *the slaves* had happily departed from the land, before the reign of Henry III. This we may infer from the law declaring, in 1225, "*How mere*

\* Dr. Henry's History of Great Britain, vol. ii. p. 479—80.

*“ of all sorts shall be amerced\* ”*: and it only mentions villains, freemen, (though probably not in the modern sense,) merchants, barons, earls, and men of the church. Another order of men is alluded to, rather than mentioned, during the same session; whom we shall find, in after times, rising to great importance, from their numbers, and opulence. And a woollen manufacture, having already increased to that stage of it, when frauds begin, was regulated by the act †, which required, *“ There shall be but one measure, throughout the realm.”*

Yet, this manufacture continued inconsiderable, during the warlike reign of Edward I. and the turbulent administration of his immediate successor, if we may judge, from the vast exportations of wool.

The year 1331 marks the first arrival of Walloon manufacturers, when Edward III. wisely determined to invite foreigners into England ‡, to instruct his subjects in the useful arts. As early as the Parliament of 1337, it was enacted, That no wool should be exported; that no one should wear any but English cloth; that no clothes made beyond seas should be imported; that foreign clothworkers might come into the king's dominions, and should have such franchises as might

\* 9 Henry III. ch. 14.

† 9 Henry III. ch. 25.

‡ And. Chron. Ac. of Com. v. i. p. 162.



suffice them. This may be considered as one of the first statutes, which gave commercial efficacy to the mercantile system.

Before this time, says De Wit\*, when the tumults of the manufacturers in Flanders, obliged them to seek shelter in other countries, the English were little more than shepherds and wool-sellers. From this epoch, manufactures became often the objects of legislation; and the spirit of industry will be found to have promoted greatly the state of population, and to have augmented considerably the opulence of all ranks of men.

The statutes of labourers of 1349 and 1350 demonstrate, that a considerable change had taken place in the condition and pursuits of the most numerous classes. During several reigns, after the Conquest, men laboured, because they were slaves. For some years, before these regulations, of the price of work, men were engaged to labour, from a sense of their own freedom, and of their own wants. It was the statutes of labourers †, which, adding the compulsion of law to the calls of necessity, created oppression for ages, while they ought to have given relief. It is extremely difficult to ascertain the time, when villainage ceased in Eng-

\* Interest of Holland.

† See the 12th Richard II. ch. 3, 4, 5, 6, 9. By these, no artificer, labourer, servant, or victualler, shall depart from one hundred to another, without licence under the king's seal. These laws, says Anderson, are sufficient proofs of the slavish condition of the common servants, in those times (1388).



land, or even to trace its decline. The Edwards, during the pressure of their foreign conquests, certainly manumitted many of their villains for money. Owing to the previous fewness of inhabitants, the numerous armies, which for almost a century desolated the nation, amidst our civil wars, must have been necessarily composed of the lower ranks : and we may reasonably suppose, that the men, who had been brought from the drudgeries of slavery, to contend as soldiers, for the honour of nobles, and the rights of kings, would not readily relinquish the honourable sword, for the meaner ploughshare. The church, even in the darkest ages, laudably remonstrated against the unchristian practice of holding fellow men in bondage. The courts of justice did not willingly enforce the master's claim to the servitude of his villains, till, in the progress of knowledge, interest discovered, that the purchased labour of freemen was more productive, than the listless, and ignoble toil of slaves. Owing to those causes, there were certainly few villains in England, at the accession of Henry VII.\*; and the great body of the people, having thus gained greater freedom, and with it greater comfort, henceforth acquired the nume-

\* The statute of 23 Henry VI. chap. 12. mentions only servants, artificers, workmen, and labourers ; and there is a distinction made between husbandry servants, and domestic servants. Yet villains are spoken of, even in our courts of justice, though seldom, as late as the time of James I.

rous blessings, which every where result from an orderly administration of established government.

During almost a century, before the accession of Henry VII. in 1485, the manufacturers of wool, with their attendant artificers, had fixed the seats of their industry, in every county, in England. The principle of the act of navigation had been introduced into our legislation, as early as 1381, by the law declaring\*, “That none of the king’s subjects shall carry forth, or bring in, merchandizes, but only in ships of the king’s allegiance.” The fisheries too had been encouraged †. Agriculture had been moreover promoted, by the law, which declared ‡, “That all the king’s subjects may carry corn out of the realm, when they will.” And *guilds, fraternities, and other companies*, having, soon after their creation, imposed monopolizing restraints, were corrected by a law of Henry VI.§; though our legislators were not very steady, during an unenlightened age, in the application of so wise a policy.

In reading the laws of Edward IV. we think ourselves in modern times, when the spirit of the mercantile system was in its full vigour, before it had been so perspicuously explained, and so ably

\* 5 Richard II. ch. 3.—6 Richard, ch. 8.

† By 6 Richard II. ch. 11, 12.

‡ 17 Richard II. ch. 7.

§ 15 Hen. VI. ch. 6.

exploded.

exploded \*. It is, however, in the laws † of Richard III. that we see more clearly the commercial state of England, during the long period, wherein the English people were unhappily too much engaged in *king-making*. In *those* inauspicious times, was the trade of England chiefly carried on by Italians, at least by merchants, from the shores of the Mediterranean. The manufacturers were composed mostly of Flemings, who, under the encouragement of Edward III. had fled from the distractions of the Netherlands, for repose, and employment in England. And, the preamble of one of Richard's laws ‡, will furnish a convincing proof, that their numbers had given great discontent to the English people: "Moreover, a great number  
 " of artificers, and other strangers, not born under  
 " the king's obedience, do daily resort to London,  
 " and to other cities, boroughs, and towns, and  
 " much more than they were wont to do in times  
 " past, and inhabit by themselves in this realm,  
 " with their wives, children, and household; and  
 " will not take upon them any laborious occupa-  
 " tion, as going to plough, and cart, and other like  
 " business, but use the making of cloth, and other  
 " handicrafts, and easy occupations; and bring from

\* By Dr. Smith's Essay on the Wealth of Nations.

† 1 Richard III. ch. 6, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13.

‡ 1 Richard III. ch. 9. But Henry VII. upon the supplication of the Italian merchants, repealed the greater part of this law, which imposed restraints on *aliens*; yet retained the forfeitures incurred, in the true spirit of his avaricious government.

“ the parts beyond the sea, great substance of wares  
 “ and merchandizes, to fairs and markets, and other  
 “ places, at their pleasure, to the impoverishment  
 “ of the king’s subjects ; and will only take into  
 “ their service, people born in their own countries ;  
 “ whereby the king’s subjects, for lack of occupa-  
 “ tion, fall into idleness and vicious living, to the  
 “ great perturbation of the realm.”—All this was  
 directed otherwise by Henry VII. though probably  
 without much success, “ upon the petition made of  
 “ the Commons of England.” In the present  
 times, it is, perhaps, the wisest policy, *neither to en-  
 courage foreigners to come, not to drive them away.*

When manufacturers have been thoroughly settled, nothing more is wanting to promote the wealth, and populousness of a country, from their labour, than the protection of their property, and freedom, by the impartial administration of justice ; while their frauds are repressed, and their combinations prevented, by doing equal right to every order in the state.

The policy of Henry VII. has been praised by historians, fully equal to its worth. Anderson relates \*, that this prince, “ finding the woollen manufactures declining, drew over some of the best  
 “ Netherland clothmakers, as Edward III. had  
 “ done, 150 years before.” This is probably said without authority ; since the law of the preceding reign, concurring with the temper of the times, did

\* Chron. Acc. of Com. v. i. p. 306.



not permit the easy execution of so unpopular a measure. Henry VII. like his two immediate predecessors, turned the attention of the Parliament to agriculture, and manufacture, to commerce, and navigation; because he found the current of the national spirit already running toward all these salutary objects: hence, says Lord Bacon \*, it was no hard matter to dispose and affect the Parliament in this business. And the legislature enacted a variety of laws, which that illustrious historian explains, with his usual perspicuity †; all tending, says he, in their wise policy, *towards the population, apparently, and the military forces of the realm, certainly.*

That monarch's measures, for breaking the oppressive power of the nobles; for facilitating the alienation of lands; *for keeping within reasonable bounds the bye-laws of corporations*; and, above all, for suppressing the numerous bodies of men, who were then retained in the service of the great; all these deserve the highest commendation; because they were attended with effects, as lasting as they were efficacious.

It may be, however, doubted, whether his piddling husbandry of petty farms, which has been ostentatiously praised by Doctor Price, can produce a sufficiency of food, for a manufacturing country, or even prevent the too frequent returns

\* History of Henry VII.

† History in Kennet, v. i. p. 504—7.



of famine. Agriculture must be practised, as a trade, before it can supply superabundance. Certain it is \*, that till the reign of Henry VIII. we had in England no carrots, turnips, cabbages, nor fallads; and few of the fruits, which at present ornament our gardens, and exhilarate our tables.

The spirit of improvement, however, which had taken deep root, before the accession of Henry VIII. continued to send forth vigorous shoots, during his reign. This we might infer from the frequent proclamations, against the practice of inclosing, which was said to create *a decay of husbandry*. On the other hand, a statute was enacted, to enforce the sowing of flax-seed, and hemp. The nation is represented *to have been over-run by foreign manufacturers*, whose superior diligence, and œconomy, occasioned popular tumults. While the kingdom was gradually filling with people, it was the yearly practice to grant money to repair towns, which were supposed to be falling into ruins. Yet, the numerous laws, that were enacted by the Parliaments of Henry VIII. for the paving of streets, in various cities and villages, prove, how much industry had gained ground of idleness; how much opulence began to prevail over penury; and how far a desire of comfort had succeeded to the labours of sloth. Thus much might indeed be discovered, from the numerous laws, which were, during this period, passed, for giving a monopoly of

\* And. Chron. Com. v. i. p. 338.

manufacture to different towns ; and which prove, that a great activity prevailed, by the frequent desire of selfish enjoyment, contrary to the real interest of the tradesmen themselves.

The statute, however, which limited the interest of money to *10 per cent.* demonstrates, that much *ready money* had not yet been brought into the coffers of lenders ; while a great number of borrowers desired to augment their wealth, by employing the money of others, in the operations of trade. The kings of England, both before and after this epoch, borrowed large sums in Genoa, and the Netherlands. A parliamentary debate, of the year 1523, exhibits a lively picture of the opinions, that were at this time entertained, as to *circulation*, which, in modern times, has so great an effect on the strength of nations. A supply of eight hundred thousand pounds being asked by Cardinal Wolsey, for the French war, Sir Thomas More, the Speaker of the Commons, endeavoured to convince *the House*, *That it was not much, on this occasion, to pay four shillings in the pound.* But to this the Commons objected, That, though true it was, some persons were well monied, yet, in general, the fifth part of mens' goods was not in plate or money, but in stock or cattle ; and that to pay away all their coin would alter the whole intercourse of things, and there would be a stop in all traffick ; and consequently the shipping of the kingdom would decay. To this grave objection, it was, however, gravely answered, That the  
money

money ought not to be accounted as lost, or taken away, but only as transferred into other hands of their kindred or nation; so that no more was about to be done than we see ordinarily in markets, where, though the money change masters, yet every one is accommodated. Nor need you fear this scarceness of money; the intercourse of things being so established, throughout the world, *that there is a perpetual circulation of all that can be necessary to mankind.* Thus your commodities will ever find out money; while our own merchants will be as glad of your corn and cattle, as you can be of any thing they can bring you\*.

Such is the argument of Sir Thomas More; who has thus left a proof to posterity, of how much he knew, with regard to modern œconomy, without the aid of modern experience. No one at present can more clearly explain the marvellous accommodation of money, when quickly passed from hand to hand, or the great facility in raising public supplies, when every one can easily convert his property, either fixed or moveable, into the metals, which are the commodious measure of all things. And this is *circulation*, of which we shall hear so much in later times; and which creates so momentous a strength, when it exists in full vigour; yet leaves, when it disappears, so great a debility.

\* Lord Herbert's History of Henry VIII. in Kennet, v. ii. p. 55.

But

But the suppression of monasteries, and the reformation of religion, are the measures of Henry VIII.'s reign, which were attended with consequences the most happy, and the most lasting. Fifty thousand persons are said to have been maintained, in the convents of England, and Wales, who were thus forced into the active employments of life. And a hundred and fifty thousand persons are equally supposed to have been restrained from marriage \*, which can alone produce effective population.

While the numbers of our people were thus augmented from various sources, Edward VI. is said to have brought over, in 1549, *many thousands* of foreign manufacturers, who greatly improved our own fabricks, of various kinds. Yet, they were not invited into a country, where the lower orders were even then very free, or very happy. The act † *for the punishment of vagabonds, and the relief of the poor*, recites, "Forasmuch as idleness  
"and vagabondrie is the mother of all thefts, and  
"other mischiefs, and the multitude of people  
"given thereto has been always here, within this  
"kingdom, very great, and more in number than  
"in other regions, to the great impoverishment of  
"the realm." This law, therefore, enacted, That if any person shall bring before two justices, any runagate servant, or any other, which liveth idly,

\* And. Chron. Com. v. i. p. 363.

† 1 Edward VI. ch. 3.



and loiteringly, by the space of three days, the same justices shall cause the said idle and loitering servant, or vagabond, to be marked on the breast with the mark of V by a hot iron, and shall adjudge him to be a *slave* to the person who brought him, and who may cause him to work, by beating, chaining, or otherwise. The unenlightened makers of this disgraceful act of legislation became soon so ashamed, as to repeal the law, which they ought to have never made. And were it not, that it shews the condition of the country, and the modes of thinking of the higher orders, in 1547, it might, without much loss, be expunged from the statute book.

But, the legislators of this reign, were more happy in some other of their laws. They restored the statute of treasons of Edward III.; they encouraged the fisheries to Iceland, to Newfoundland, and to Ireland. They inflicted penalties on the sellers of victuals, who were not content with reasonable profit, and on artificers and labourers, conspiring the time, and manner of their work. As "*great inconveniencies, not meet to be rehearsed, had followed of compelled chastity,*" all positive laws, against the marriage of priests, were repealed. Manufactures were encouraged, partly by procuring the materials at the cheapest rate, but still more by preventing frauds. And agriculture was promoted by means of inclosing, which is said to have given rise to Ket's rebellion, in 1549. This event alone, sufficiently proves, that the people  
4 had



had considerably increased, but had not yet applied steadily to labour.

While the absurd practice continued, during the reign of Mary, of promoting manufactures by monopoly, instead of competition, one law alone appears to have been attended with effects, continual, and salutary. It is the act \* “for the mending of highways;” being now, “says the law, “both very noisome and tedious to travel in, and “dangerous to passengers, and carriages.” The first effort of English legislation, on a subject so much connected with the prosperity of every people, is the act of Edward I. for enlarging the breadth of highways, from one market town to another. This law, which was enacted in 1285, was, however, intended rather to prevent robbery, than to promote facility in travelling. The roads of particular districts were amended by several laws of Henry VIII. But this act of Philip and Mary is the first general law, which obliged every parish, by four days labour of its people, to repair its own roads. The reign of Charles II. merits the praise of having first established turnpikes; whereby those, who enjoy the benefits of easy conveyance, contribute the necessary expence. Yet, when Cowley retired from the *hum of men* to Chertsey, in 1665, he thence invited Sprat to enjoy the pleasures of St. Anne’s Hill, by telling him, *that he might sleep the first night at Hampton*

\* 2 & 3 Philip and Mary, ch. 8.

*Town:* A poet of the present day would invite his friend at London, by saying, *that he might easily step into the coach, and come down to breakfast.* Even in the subsequent age, when Sir Francis Wronghead was chosen into Parliament, we hear of much preparation for his journey to town, and of many accidents by the way, owing to the badness of the roads: A parliament-man, at present, sends to the next stage for post-horses, when there is a call of the house, and arrives in Westminster, from any distance, at any hour.

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## CHAP. III.

*The State of England, at the Accession of Elizabeth.—Her Laws.—The Numbers of People, during her Reign.—Her Strength.—The Policy, and Power of the two subsequent Reigns.—The State of England, at the Restoration.—The Number of People, at the Revolution.—Reflections.*

**B**EFORE the commencement of the celebrated reign of Elizabeth, a considerable change had doubtless taken place, in our policy, and in the numbers of our people. Agriculture, manufactures, fisheries, commerce, distant voyages, had all been begun, and made some progress, from the spirit, that had already been incited. Yet, so little opulence had been hitherto accumulated by the people of England, that she was, on her accession, obliged to borrow several very small sums of money, in Flanders, which had grown rich by its industry. From that epoch, however, England prospered greatly, during the domestic tranquillity of a steady government, through half a century, as well as afterwards, from the example of œconomy and prudence, of activity and vigour, which Elizabeth, on all occasions, set before her subjects.

The act of Elizabeth \* containing orders for

\* 5 Eliz. ch. 4.

*artificers, labourers, servants of husbandry, and apprentices*, merits consideration; because we may learn from it the state of the country. *Villains*, we see, from this enumeration, had ceased, before 1562, to be objects of legislation. And we may perceive, from the recital, "That the wages, and allowances, rated in former statutes, are in divers places too small, and *not answerable to this time*, respecting *the advancement of all things*, belonging to the said servants, and labourers,"—a favourable change had taken place, in the fortunes of this numerous class. This law, as far as it requires apprenticeships, ought to be repealed; because its tendency is to abridge the liberty of the subject, and to prevent competition among workmen.

The same observation may be applied to the act "against the erecting of cottages\*." If we may credit the assertion of the legislature, "great multitudes of cottages, were daily more and more increasing, in many parts of this realm." This statement evinces an augmentation of people: yet, the execution of such regulations, as this law contains, by no means promotes the useful race of husbandry servants.

The principle of the poor laws, which may be said to have originated in this reign, as far as it necessarily confines the labourer to the place of his birth, is at once destructive of freedom, and of the true interests of a manufacturing community, that

\* 13 Eliz. ch. 7.

can alone be effectually promoted by competition; which hinders the rise of wages among workmen, and promotes at once the goodness, and cheapness of the manufacture.

A few salutary laws, were doubtless made, during the reign of Elizabeth. But her legislation will be found, not to merit generally much praise. Her acts for encouraging manufactures by monopoly; for promoting trade by prohibition; and for aiding husbandry, by preventing the export of corn, alone justify this remark. Her regulations, for punishing the frauds, which arise commonly in manufactures, when they are encouraged by monopoly, merit commendation.

Having thus shewn the commencement of an increasing population, amidst famines, and war; and traced a considerable progress, during ages of healthfulness and quiet, it is now time to ascertain the precise numbers, which probably existed in England, towards the end of Queen Elizabeth's reign.

From the documents, which still remain in the *Museum*, it is certainly known, that very accurate accounts were often taken of the people, by the intelligent ministers of that great princess. Harison, who has transmitted an elaborate description of England, gives us the result of the musters, of 1575, when the number of fighting men was found to be - - - - - 1,172,674: Adding withal, that it was believed, a full third had been omitted. Notwithstanding the greatness



of this number, says Mr. Hume, the same author complains much of the decay of *populoufness*; a vulgar complaint, in all ages, and places\*. Sir Walter Raleigh, however, asserts, that there was a general review, in 1583, of all the men in England, capable of bearing arms, who were found to amount to - - - - - 1,172,000.

Here, then, are two credible evidences to an important fact; That, in 1575, or 1583, the fighting men, of England, according to enumerations, amounted to - - - - - 1,172,000

Which, if multiplied by 4, would prove

the men, women, and children to

have been - - - - - 4,688,000

If by 5, would prove them to have

been - - - - - 5,860,000

\* Hist. vol. v. p. 481.—vi. p. 179. By endeavouring to collect every thing that could throw light on the population of Elizabeth's reign, Mr. Hume has bewildered himself and his reader. Peck has preserved a paper, which, by proving that there were musters in 1575, confirms Harrifon's account. [Desid. Curiosa, v. i. p. 74.] It is a known fact, that there was an enumeration of the mariners, in 1582, which corresponds with Raleigh's account. [Campbel's Pol. Survey, v. i. p. 161.] That there were several surveys, then, is a fact incontrovertible; as appears, indeed, from the Harl. MSS. in Brit. Mus. Nos. 412 and 6,839. The Privy Council having required the Bishops, in July, 1563, to certify the number of *families*, in their several dioceses, were informed minutely of the particulars of each. Some of the Bishops returns may be seen in MSS. Harl. No. 595. Brit. Mus. From the Bishops certificates, as well as from the 31 Eliz. ch. 7. it appears, that the words *families*, and *households*, were then used synonymously.

Without

Without comparing minutely the numbers, which we have already found, in 1377, with the people, who thus plainly existed, in 1577, it is apparent, that there had been a vast increase in the intermediate two hundred years. Such, then, were the numbers of the fighting men, and of the inhabitants of England, during the reign of Elizabeth : and such was the power, while her revenue was inconsiderable, wherewith that illustrious Queen defended the independence of the nation, and spread wide its renown \*.

But, it is the ardour, with which a people are inspired, more than their numbers, that constitutes their real force. It was the enmity wherewith *the armada* had inspired England against Spain, which prompted the English people, rather than the

\* The particular number, of the *communicants* and *recusants*, in each diocese, and parish of England, was certified to the Privy Council, by the Bishops, in 1603.—MSS. Harl. Brit. Mus. No. 280.

And the number of communicants was	- - -	2,057,033
Of recusants	- - - - -	8,465

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In all - - - 2,065,498

By the 33d Eliz. chap. 1. all persons, upwards of sixteen years of age, were required to go to church, under the penalty of twenty pounds. If the 2,065,498, contained all the persons, both male, and female, who were thus required to frequent the church, this number would correspond very well with the fighting men lately stated; and shew the people of England, and Wales, to have been between four and five millions, during Elizabeth's reign, though approaching nearer to the last number, than the first.

English court, to aid the bastard Don Antonio to conquer Portugal: and *twenty thousand* volunteers engaged in this romantic enterprize, under those famous leaders, Norris, and Drake.—An effort, which shewed the manners of the age, more than its populoufness, ended in disappointment, as might have been foreseen, if enthusiasm, and reason, were not always at variance. An alarm being given of an invasion, by the Spaniards, in 1599, the Queen equipped a fleet, and levied an army, in a fortnight, to oppose them. Nothing, we are told, gave foreigners a higher idea of the power of England, than this sudden armament. Yet, it is not too much to assert, that Lancashire alone, considering its numerous manufactories, and extensive commerce, is now able to make a more steady exertion \*, amidst modern warfare, than the whole kingdom, in the time of Elizabeth.

The

\* The traders of Liverpool alone, fitted out, at the commencement of the late war with France, between the 26th of August, 1778, and the 17th of April, 1779, a hundred and twenty privateers, armed each with ten to thirty guns, but mostly with fourteen to twenty. From an accurate list, containing the name, and appointment of each, it appears, that these privateers, measured 30,787 tons, carrying 1,986 guns, and 8,754 men. The fleet sent against the armada, in 1588, measured 31,985 tons, and was navigated by 15,272 seamen. And, from the efforts of a single town, we may infer, that the private ships of war formed a greater force, during the war of the Colonies, than the nation, with all its unanimity and zeal, was able to equip, under the potent government of Elizabeth. There was an enumeration, in 1581, of the shipping, and  
sailors

The accession of James I. was an event auspicious to the prosperity, and the populousness, of Great Britain. The tranquillity of the Northern counties of England, which it had been the object of so many of Elizabeth's laws to settle, was at once restored: and the two-and-twenty years of uninterrupted peace, during his reign, must have produced the most salutary effect on the industry of the people, while the neighbouring nations were engaged in warfare, though his peaceableness has cast an unmerited ridicule on the King.

The various laws, which were passed by this monarch, for suppressing the frauds of manufactures, evince, at once, that they had increased in considerable numbers, and must have continued to increase. The acts for reformation of ale-houses, and repressing of drunkenness, as they plainly proceeded from the puritanism of the times, must have promoted sobriety of manners, and attention to business. The act, for the relief, and regulation of persons, who were infected with the plague, must have had its effect, in preventing the frequent return of this destructive evil. Domestic industry was doubtless promoted by the act against monopolies: and foreign commerce was assuredly extended by the law, enabling all persons to trade with Spain, Portugal, and France. But, above

sailors of England, which amounted to 72,450 tons, and 14,295 mariners. To this statement, Doctor Campbell adds, That the seamen of the ships, registered in the port of London, in 1732, were 21,797. [Pol. Survey, vol. i. p. 161.]

all,



all, the agricultural interests of the nation, were insured by the act, for confirming the possession of copyholders; and still more, by the law, for the general quiet of the subject, against all pretence of dormant claims on the lands, which had descended from remote ancestors, to the then possessors. Of this salutary law, the principle was adopted, and its efficacy enforced, by a legislative act of the present reign.

A comparison of the laws, which were enacted by the parliaments of Elizabeth, and of James, would leave a decided preference, to the parliamentary leaders of the last period, both in wisdom, and in patriotism. The private acts of parliament, in Elizabeth's time, were made chiefly to *restore the blood* of those, who had been attainted by her predecessors: the private acts of James, were almost all made for *naturalizing foreigners*. One of the last parliamentary grants of this reign, was £. 18,000 for the reparation of decaying cities, and towns, though it is not now easy to tell how the money was actually applied.

Elizabeth had begun the practice of giving bounties to the builders of such ships as carried *one hundred* tons. James I. merits the praise of giving large sums, for the encouragement of this most important manufacture. And while Charles I. patronized every ornamental art, he gave, from a very scanty revenue, a bounty of five shillings the ton for every vessel of the burthen of *two hundred* tons. These notices enable us to trace the

size



size of our merchant-ships, through a very active century of years. The ministers of Elizabeth, had considered a vessel of one hundred tons as sufficient for the purposes of an inconsiderable commerce: the advisers of Charles I. were not satisfied with so small a size. It was to this wise policy, that the trading ships, of England, were employed, ere long, in protecting her rights, and even in extending her glory.

The act which, in 1623, reduced the interest of money to eight *per cent.* from ten, shews sufficiently, even against the preamble of it, that complains of decline, how much the nation had prospered, and was then advancing to a higher state of improvement. Such laws can never be safely enacted, till all parties, the lenders as well as the borrowers, are properly prepared to receive them. The cheerfulness of honest Stowe, led him to see, and to represent, the state of England, during the reign of James, as it really was. He says, as Camden had said before him, in 1580, that it would, in time, be incredible, were there not due mention made of it, what great increase there is, within these few years, of commerce, and wealth, throughout the kingdom; of the great building of royal, and mercantile ships; of the repeopling of cities, towns, and villages; beside the sudden augmentation of fair and costly buildings. The great measure of the reign of King James, which was productive of effects, lasting, and unhappy, was the settlement of colonies beyond the Atlantic.

Lord

Lord Clarendon exhibits a picture equally flattering, of the condition of England, during the peaceful years of Charles I. And the representation of this great historian, is altogether consistent with probability, and experience. The vigorous spirit, which Elizabeth had bequeathed to her people, continued to operate, long after she had ceased to delight them by her presence, or to protect them by her wisdom. The laws of former legislators produced successively their tardy effects. And it ought to be remembered that, neither disputes among the great, parliamentary altercations, nor even civil contests, till they proceed the length of tumult, and bloodshed, ever produce any bad consequences to the industry, or comfort, of the governed.

The civil wars, which began in 1640, unhappy as they were, while they continued, both to king and people, produced, in the end, the most salutary influences, by bringing the higher and lower ranks closer together, and by continuing, in all, a vigour of design, and activity of practice, that, in prior ages, had no example.

One of the first consequences of real hostilities, was the establishment of taxes, to which the people had seldom contributed, and which produced, before the conclusion of tedious warfare, the enormous sum of £.95,512,095\*. The gallant supporters  
of

\* Stevens's Hist. of Taxes, p. 296. But Stevens includes the sales of confiscated lands, compositions for estates, and such other more oppressive modes of raising money. There  
were

of Charles I. gave the sovereign, whom they loved, amidst his distresses, large sums of money, while confiscations left them any thing to give. Here, then, were the mines of Potosi opened in England. The opulence, which industry had been collecting for ages, was now brought into action, by the arts of the tax-gatherer: and the country-gentlemen, who had long complained of a *scarcity of money*, contributed greatly, by unlocking their coffers, to remove the evil, that they had themselves created by hoarding.

One of the first effects of civil commotion was the placing of private money in the shops of goldsmiths, for its better security, and for the advantage of the interest, which, at the commencement of banking, was allowed the proprietors. By facilitating the ready transfer of property, and the easy payment of private debts, as well as public imposts, *banking* may be regarded as the fruitful mother of *circulation*. The collecting of taxes, and the frequent expenditure, raised, ere long, the price of all things. Owing to those causes, chiefly, the legal interest of money was reduced, in 1651, to six *per cent*. And the reduction of interest is, at once, a proof of previous acquisition, and a means of future prosperity.

*The Restoration* of Charles II. induced the people to transfer the energy, which they had exerted

were collected, by *excises* only, £. 10,200,000; and by tonnage, and poundage, £. 5,700,000.

during

during twenty years hostilities, to the various operations of peace. The several manufactories, and new productions of husbandry, that were introduced from foreign countries, before the *Revolution*, not only formed a new epoch, but evince a vigorous application to the useful arts, in the intermediate period. The common highways were enlarged, and repaired, while turnpikes were placed on the great Northern road, in the counties of Hertford, Huntingdon, and Cambridge. Rivers were deepened, for the purposes of internal conveyance by water. The acts of navigation created ship-carpenters and sailors, though these salutary laws were long complained of, as destructive to commerce. Foreign trade was increased by opening new markets, and by withdrawing the alien duties, which had always obstructed the vent of native manufactures. Those measures alone, that made internal communications at once easy, and safe, would have promoted the prosperity, and the population of any country.

But, above all, the change of manners, and the intermixture of the higher and middle ranks, by marriages, induced the gentry, and even the younger branches of the nobility, to bind their sons apprentices to merchants, and thereby to ennoble a profession, that was before only gainful; to invigorate traffic by their greater capitals, and to extend its operations by their superior knowledge. Hence, Child, Petty, and Davenant, agreed in  
6 asserting,



asserting\*, in opposition to the party writers of the times, that, the commerce, and riches of England did never, in any former age, increase so fast as in the busy period, from the Restoration to the Revolution.

Yet, in 1680, was published *Britannia Linguens*; in order to prove, that, in the same period, *a kind of common consumption hath crowded upon us.*

The truth of the *board's* conclusion is, however, proved more satisfactorily, by the following detail, than by any document, which has been yet submitted to the public. It is an authentic account of *the Customs*, which were collected in England, and which, as they more than doubled, in the period from the Restoration to the Revolution, shew clearly, that the trade of England prospered, in the mean time, nearly in the same proportion. There was an additional duty on wines, imposed in 1672, and an impost on wine, tobacco, and

\* The Board of Trade represented, in December, 1697: “ We have made inquiry into the state of trade, in general, “ from the year 1670 to the present time: and from the best “ calculations we can make, by the duties paid at the Custom- “ house, we are of opinion, that trade in general did consi- “ derably increase, from the end of the Dutch war, in 1675, to “ 1689, when the late war began.” Yet, the Board seem not to have attended to the 25 Cha. II. ch. 6; which wisely enacted, That *Denizens*, and *Aliens*, should pay no more taxes for the *native commodities* of this kingdom, or for *fish caught in English ships*, when exported, than subjects.



linen, in 1685: But, as these duties were kept separate, they appear neither to have swelled, nor diminished, the usual receipt of the custom-house duties, in any of the years, either of peace, or of war.

An Account of the Customs, which were received,  
in the following Years of Peace, and of War :

<i>Years.</i>	<i>Duty of Customs.</i>			<i>New additional Duty on Wines.</i>		
	<i>£.</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>	<i>£.</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
From 24th July 1660, to 29th September 1661	421,582	7	11			
The year ended 29th September - - 1662	414,946	15	10 $\frac{1}{4}$			
Ditto, - - 1663	525,415	14	4			
Ditto, - - 1664	579,662	11	0 $\frac{3}{4}$			
Ditto, - - 1665	519,072	4	2			
Ditto, - - 1666	303,766	10	1 $\frac{3}{4}$			
Ditto, - - 1667	408,324	0	2 $\frac{3}{4}$			
The year ended Michaelmas - - 1668	626,998	5	4 $\frac{3}{4}$			
Ditto, - - 1669	519,773	19	2 $\frac{1}{4}$			
Ditto, - - 1670	516,229	19	7 $\frac{1}{2}$			
Ditto, - - 1671	525,736	15	4 $\frac{1}{2}$			
Ditto, - - 1672	563,383	1	6 $\frac{1}{2}$	148,959	2	5 $\frac{1}{4}$
Ditto, - - 1673	507,763	6	6	165,622	10	6 $\frac{3}{4}$
Ditto, - - 1674	636,132	10	5 $\frac{1}{2}$	127,443	16	5 $\frac{1}{4}$
Ditto, - - 1675	674,133	16	0 $\frac{1}{4}$	122,001	16	4 $\frac{1}{4}$
Ditto, - - 1676	650,878	7	1	150,692	1	5 $\frac{1}{2}$
Ditto, - - 1677	677,626	15	2 $\frac{3}{4}$	149,770	19	6 $\frac{1}{4}$
Ditto, - - 1678	646,325	12	6 $\frac{3}{4}$	126,126	16	2 $\frac{1}{2}$
Ditto, - - 1679	592,762	11	7 $\frac{1}{4}$	96,639	1	0 $\frac{1}{4}$
Ditto, - - 1680	633,562	8	4 $\frac{3}{4}$	156,132	11	10 $\frac{1}{2}$
Ditto, - - 1681	621,615	12	0	90,222	7	3 $\frac{3}{4}$
Ditto, - - 1682	742,721	2	0 $\frac{1}{2}$	221	9	7 $\frac{1}{4}$
Ditto, - - 1683	768,166	9	2 $\frac{1}{4}$			
Ditto, - - 1684	780,660	19	3 $\frac{1}{4}$	1	14	4
Ditto, - - 1685	701,504	3	4			
Ditto, - - 1686	780,679	14	8 $\frac{1}{2}$			
Ditto, - - 1687	884,955	0	3 $\frac{1}{4}$			
Ditto, - - 1688	781,987	2	9 $\frac{1}{2}$			

From the before-mentioned circumstances, and  
facts, which prove, that there had been many ad-  
ditional employments, we may reasonably infer,

E

that

that there had also been a considerable augmentation of inhabitants, who were the more important to the state; because they were the most industrious. But, many emigrated, it has been said, to the colonies, and many perished by pestilence. Yet, the Lord Chief Justice Hale insists, "That mankind hath still increased, even to manifest sense, and experience:" and because, says he, this is an assertion of fact, it is impossible to be made out, but by instances of fact. If, however, he adds, we should institute a comparison, between the present time (1670), and the beginning of Queen Elizabeth's reign (1558), and compare the number of trained soldiers then, and now, the number of subsidy men then, and now, they will easily give an account of a very great increase of people, within this kingdom, even to admiration\*.

A more

\* See Lord Hale's convincing argument, in *The Origination of Mankind considered*, ch. 10. Sir John Dalrymple found, in King William's cabinet, a minute account of the number of freeholders, in England, which was taken by order of that monarch, in order to find out the proportion between churchmen, dissenters, and papists; and which, Sir John has published, in the Appendix to his Memoirs:

	Conformists.	Non Con.	Papists.
In Canterbury, and York	2,477,254	108,676	13,856
Contrast with these the before-mentioned communicants, and recusants, in			
1603 - - - - -	2,057,033	- - - -	8,465

This comparison, after allowing for the original inaccuracies

A mere question of fact, with regard to the number of births, at any two distant periods, may doubtless, be either confirmed, or disproved, by an appeal to the parish registers ; which, containing a collection of facts, may be regarded as one of the best proofs, that the nature of the inquiry admits. And the Lord Chief Justice Hale remarked of them, because he was struck with the force of their evidence, *That they gave a greater demonstration of the gradual increase of mankind, than a hundred notional arguments, can either evince, or confute.* For, a greater number of births, in any one period, more than at any prior epoch, must proceed from a greater number of breeders ; which denotes, a more numerous population. And, from an attentive examination of such proofs, Graunt proceeded \*, in 1662, to shew, with great ability, the progressive increase of the people, and to prove, how easily the country could supply the capital

cies of both accounts, shews a great change in the numbers, in the opinions, and practice of the people, from 1603, to 1689.

\* See The Observations on the Bills of Mortality. Doctor Price has quoted Tindal, for the fact, That there appeared, by the hearth-books of 1665, in England, and Wales,

	1,230,000 houses.
The acknowledged number, in 1690 - -	<u>1,300,000</u>

This, if we may credit Tindal, is sufficient evidence of a rapid increase, in no long period, Graunt calculated the people of England, and Wales, in 1662, at 6,440,000 persons.

with numerous recruits, without any sensible diminution.

Having thus traced a gradual progress in population, it is now time to ascertain the precise numbers, at the Revolution. And Gregory King, who has been praised by Davenant, for his research, and his skilfulness, has left us documents, from which we may form an estimate, sufficiently accurate for the uses of history, or the purposes of legislation. From an inspection of the hearth-books, and the assessments on marriages, births, and burials, King formed calculations, of the numbers of families, houses, and people; which, according to Davenant, “were, perhaps, more to be relied upon, than “any thing that had been ever done, of the like “kind.”

It had been the fashion, of the preceding age, to state the numbers of mankind, in every country, too high: from this period, ingenious men were carried away, by a reprehensible self-sufficiency to calculate them too low. Of the statements of King, it was remarked, by Mr. Robert Harley\*, in 1697, “These assessments are no good foundation; heads at a medium, being (according to the “computation) *per* house, in London, only *five*: “omissions, in the country, are probably greater “than in London, because, numbering the people “is there more terrible. The polls are instances: “families of seven, or eight persons, being not

\* Harl. MSS. in the Museum, Nos. 6,837—7,021.

“numbered



“ numbered at above three, or four persons, in some  
 “ remote counties.” Yet, by thus calculating  $4\frac{1}{11}$ ,  
 instead of 5, in every *family*, which was still con-  
 sidered as synonymous with *household*, this would  
 demonstrate an increase of a million, during the  
 foregoing century. So our poets used the word  
*household*, to signify a *family living together* : Thus,  
 SHAKESPEARE :—

“ Two *households*, both alike in dignity,  
 In fair Verona, where we lay our scene,  
 From ancient grudge break to new mutiny.”

Thus, MILTON :

Of God observ'd  
 The one just man alive, by his command,  
 Should build a wond'rous ark, as thou beheldst,  
 To save himself and *household* from amidst  
 A world devote to universal wreck.

Thus, the more flippant SWIFT :

In his own church he keeps a seat,  
 Says grace before and after meat,  
 And calls, without affecting airs,  
 His *household* twice a-day to prayers.

Davenant, by publishing only extracts from  
 King's observations, and by speaking confusedly  
 of *families*, and *houses*, has done an injury to King,  
 and to truth. All will appear consistent, and clear,  
 when this ingenious calculator is allowed to speak  
 for himself.

The number of *houses* in the kingdom, as charged, says he, in the books of the Hearth Office at Lady Day, 1690, were, - - - 1,319,215 : But, whereas the chimney money being charged on the tenant, or inhabitant, the divided houses stand as so many distinct dwellings, in the accounts of the said Hearth Office. And, whereas the empty houses, smiths' shops, &c. are included in the said account, all which may very well amount to 1 in 36, or 37, (or near 3 *per cent.*) which, in the whole, may be about 36,000 houses; it follows, that the true number, of *inhabited houses*, is not above - 1,290,000 ; which, however, we shall call, in round

numbers, - - - - - 1,300,000

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Having thus adjusted the number of houses, we come now, continues he, to apportion the number of souls, to each, according to what we have observed, from the said assessments on marriages, births, and burials.

London, within the walls, produced

almost - - - - -  $5\frac{1}{2}$  *per* house.

Sixteen parishes without, full - -  $4\frac{1}{2}$

The rest of the bills of mortality,

almost - - - - -  $4\frac{1}{2}$

The other cities, and market towns  $4\frac{1}{2}$

The villages, and hamlets - - - 4

---

So,

So, London, and the bills of mortality con- tained - -	Inhabited houses.	per house.	Souls.
- -	105,000	at 4,57	479,600
The cities, and market towns	195,000	4,3	838,500
The villages, and hamlets - -	1,000,000	4	4,000,000
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
In all -	1,300,000	4,9	5,318,100
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

But, considering, that the omissions in the said assessments may well be,

In London, and the bills of morta- lity - - - -	10 per cent. or	47,960 souls
In the cities, and market towns -	2 per cent. or	16,500
In the villages, and hamlets - - -	1 per cent. or	40,000
		<hr/>
In all - - - -		104,460 souls:
		<hr/>

It follows, that the true number of people, dwelling in the 1,300,000 *inhabited houses*, should be - - - - - 5,422,560.

Lastly; whereas the number of transitory people, as seamen, and soldiers, may be accounted 140,000; whereof, nearly one half, or 60,000, have no place in the said assessments: and that the number of vagrants, as hawkers, pedlars, crate carriers,

carriers, gipsies, thieves, and beggars, may be reckoned 30,000; whereof above one half, or 20,000, may not be taken notice of, in the said assessments, making in all, 80,000 persons: It follows, that the whole number of people in England, and Wales, is much about 5,500,000; viz.

In London - - - - -	530,000 souls
In the other cities, and towns -	870,000
In the villages, and hamlets - -	4,100,000
<hr/>	
In all - - - - -	5,500,000
<hr/>	

The number of inhabited *houses*

being about - - - - - 1,300,000

The number of *families* about - 1,360,000

The people answer, at  $4\frac{1}{2}$  *per* house, and 4 *per* family.

Thus much from Gregory King's Political Observations\*. And his statements are, doubtless, very curious, and even exact, though we now know, that the number of dwellers, which he allowed to every house, and to every family, was a good deal under the truth, as Mr. Robert Harley, at the time, suspected.

Subsequent inquirers have enumerated the houses, and the inhabitants of various villages, towns, and cities, instead of relying on the defective returns of

\* There is, in MSS. Harl. Brit. Mus. No. 1,898, a very fair copy of King's *Observations*, which are now annexed to this Estimate.

tax-gatherers. Doctor Price became, at length, disposed to admit, from the enumerations, which he had seen, that *five* persons, and a sixth, reside in every house\*. Mr. Howlet, from a still greater number of enumerations, insists  $\frac{1}{4}$  for five, and two-fifths. It will, at last, be found, perhaps  $\frac{1}{3}$ , that five and two-fifths are the smallest number, which, on an average of the whole kingdom, dwells in every house.

Little doubt can surely now remain, of there having been, in England and Wales, 1,300,000 inhabited houses at the Revolution. Were we to multiply this number by *five*, it would demonstrate a population of six millions and a half: were we to

\* Reversionary Payments, v. ii. p. 288.

† Examination of Price, p. 145.

‡ In 1773, Dr. Price insisted that there were *not quite five* in every house. [Observations on Reversionary Payments, 3d edition, p. 184.] In 1783, the Doctor seemed willing to allow, five one-sixth in every house: But he still contends, That, if you throw out of the calculation, Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham, and other populous towns, the number, in every house, *ought to be less than five*. [Observations on Reversionary Payments, 4th edit. v. ii. p. 288—9.] The Rev. Mr. New made a very accurate enumeration, of the parish of St. Philip, and St. Jacob, in the city of Bristol, during the year 1781, and found 1,529 inhabited houses, and therein 9,850 souls. These numbers prove, that more than six, one-third, dwell in every house. And from this enumeration we may infer, That, in the full inhabited city of Bristol, six, at least, reside in every house. If, in the spirit of Doctor Price, we throw out of the calculation all populous places, and studiously collect such decaying towns as Sandwich, the proportion, to every house, must be limited to *five*.

multiply



multiply by five, and two-fifths, or even by five, and one-fifth, this operation would carry the number up, nearly, to seven millions: and seven millions were considered, by some of the most intelligent men of that day, as the whole amount of the people, of this kingdom, at the Revolution.

But, if we take the lowest number, of six millions and a half, and compare it with five millions, the highest number, probably, in 1588, this comparison would evince an increase of a million and a half, in the subsequent century, and of more than four millions, from 1377. Yet, Doctor Price considered the epoch of the *Reformation* (1517) as a period of greater population, than the æra of the Revolution.

In giving an account of the reign of King William, Sir John Dalrymple remarks, “That *three and twenty regiments were completed in six weeks*. This is, doubtless, an adequate proof, of the ardour of the times, but it is a very slight evidence, of an overflowing populoufness. Want of employment, often sends recruits to an army, which, in more industrious years, would languish without hope of reinforcements. We may learn, indeed, from Sir Josiah Child, That it was a question agitated, during the reign of Charles II:—“If we have more  
“people now than in former ages, how came it to  
“pass, that in the times of Henry IV, and V. and  
“even in prior times, we could raise such great  
“armies, and employ them in foreign wars, and  
“yet retain a sufficient number to defend the  
“king-

“ kingdom, and to cultivate our lands at home ?  
“ I answer first,” says this judicious writer, “ that  
“ bigness of armies is not a certain indication of  
“ the numerousness of a nation, but sometimes of  
“ the government, and distribution of the lands ;  
“ where the prince and lords are owners of the  
“ whole territory : although the people be thin,  
“ the armies, upon occasion, may be very great, as  
“ in Fez, and Morocco. Secondly, princes armies,  
“ in Europe, are become more proportionable to  
“ their purses, than to the numbers of their peo-  
“ ple.”

Thus much it was thought proper to premise,  
with regard to the previous condition, and policy, of  
England, as well as its populousness, at different  
periods, anterior to *The Revolution*, when **THIS**  
**ESTIMATE** begins.

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## CHAP. IV.

*Opinions, as to the Strength of Nations.—Reflections.—The real Power of England, during King William's Reign.—The State of the Nation.—The Losses of her Trade, from King William's Wars.—Her Commerce revives.—Complaints of Decline, amidst her Prosperity.—Reflections.*

**T**HEORISTS are not agreed, in respect to those circumstances, which form the strength of nations, either actual, or comparative. One considers the power of a people “to consist in their numbers, and wealth.” Another insists, “that the force of every community most essentially depends on the capacity, valour, and union, of the leading characters of the state.” And a third, adopting partly the sentiments of both, contends, “that though numbers, and riches, are highly important, and the resources of war may decide a contest, where other advantages are equal; yet the resources of war, in hands that cannot employ them, are of little avail, since manners are as essential, as either people, or wealth.”

It is not the purpose of this Estimate to amuse the fancy with uninformative definitions, or to bewilder the judgment with verbal disputations, which are as unmeaning, as they are unprofitable. The  
glories

glories of the war, of 1756, have cast a continued ridicule on the far-famed *Estimator of the manners, and principles, of those times*. Recent struggles, have thrown equal ridicule on other calculators, of an analogous spirit. And we may find reason, in the end, to conclude, that the qualities of the mind, either vigorous, or effeminate, have undergone, in this island, no unhappy change, whatever alteration there certainly is, in the labour of the hands of our people, from the epoch of the Revolution, to the present moment.

But, from general remark, let us descend to minute investigations, with regard to the progressive numbers of the people, to the extent of their industry, and to the successive amount of their traffic, and accumulations; because our resources arose then, as they arise now, *from the land and labour of this island alone*.

The insult, offered by France, to the sovereignty of England, by giving an asylum to an abdicated monarch, and by disputing the right of a high-minded people, to regulate their own affairs, forced King William into an eight-years war, with that potent country, which he personally hated, and, with which, he ardently wished to quarrel. He had therefore no inclination to weigh, in very scrupulous scales, the wealth of his subjects, against the greater opulence of their rivals, who were, in those days, more industrious, and were further advanced in the practice of manufacture, and knowledge  
of

of traffic. Yet, the desire of that warlike monarch, being seconded by the zeal of his people, whose resources were not then equal to their bravery, he was enabled to engage, in an arduous dispute, for the most honourable end. Happy! had hostilities ended, as soon as the independence of the nation was vindicated from insult, and when the interests of the people required the cessation of warfare.

We may form a sufficient judgment of the strength of England, at that æra, from the following detail :

The number of *fighting men*, according to the calculation of Gregory King, as cited, with approbation by Davenant, was 1,308,000 ; yet the one-fourth of the people formed the men fit for war, whatever may have been the real population of England, during the reign of King William.

The yearly income of the nation from its land, and labour, amounted, if we may credit the statement of Gregory King, to - - - - £. 43,500,000

The yearly expense of the people, for their necessary subsistence, - - 41,700,000

The yearly accumulation, of profit, £ 1,800,000

The



The value of the whole kingdom, according to Gregory King, £.650,000,000\* ; which, forming the capital, whence income arose, was no proper fund for taxation.

Davenant states, from various *conjectures* and *calculations*, the circulating money, at £.18,500,000†, while there yet existed, in the nation, no paper-money, and little circulation ; which, by facilitating the easy transfer of property, is so favourable to the levying of taxes.

King James's annual income, amounted only to £.2,061,856. 7s. 9½d.‡ ; which was a greater revenue, than any of his predecessors had ever enjoyed.

Of this there remained, in the Exchequer, on the 5th of November, 1688, £.80,138 § ; which

\* See Gregory King's Polit. Observations.

† Gregory King, having stated the silver coin at eight million and a half, in 1688, and the gold coin at three million, Mr. Robert Harley thereupon, remarked, "That the mint accounts would make us believe there is more gold coin than three million; but both accounts, together, would make a good estimate."—MSS. Harl. Brit. Mus. 1,898. The circulating coin may, therefore, be taken at eleven million and a half, during King William's reign. It was one of the tenets of Doctor Price, to maintain, that we had more coins in circulation, during those times, than at present.

‡ Hist. of Debts, p. 6—7.

§ For the accurate informations, which these sheets convey, from a transcript of the Exchequer-books, in King William, and Queen Anne's reigns, the public owe an additional obligation, and the compiler a kindness, to the liberal communication of Mr. Attle.

little enabled King William, either to defray the expenses of the Revolution, or to prepare for a war with France.

The nett income, paid into the Exchequer, in 1691, from the customs, and excise, from the land, and from polls, amounted only to £. 4,249,757; of which there were applied, towards carrying on the war, £. 3,393,634, and to the support of the civil establishment, £. 856,123\*.

The average of the annual supplies, during the war, which were raised, with difficulty, from a dissatisfied people, amounted only to £. 5,105,505†; whence we may form an opinion of the force, which could then be exerted, though it must be admitted, that the same nominal sum had, in those days, a greater power than it had in after times.

There were borrowed, by the government, at an interest of seven, and eight *per cent.* while the legal interest of money was only six, from the 5th of November, 1688, to Lady-day, 1702, - - - - - £. 44,100,795;

Of which there were mean while

repaid, - - - - - 34,034,018;

Of this debt there remained due

at Lady-day, 1702‡, - - - £. 10,066,777

So unproductive had each branch of taxes proved, during every year of the war, that the revenue, which had existed before it began, fell above one-

\* Mr. Atle's Transcript.

† Id.

‡ Id.

half, in five years\*; and the deficiencies appeared to have swelled, before the session of 1696, to what was then deemed the enormous sum of £. 6,000,460; which greatly enfeebled every exertion of the government, by the advance in the price of all things. The annual collection of taxes, to the amount of two million and a half, more than had been levied on the country, in preceding times, while their foreign trade was cut off, was alone sufficient to embarrass a people, who possessed greater powers of industry, and circulation. It is an instructive fact, which is transmitted by Davenant, that imposts did not then enhance the price of the commodity to the consumer, when in its highest state of improvement, but fell on the grower, who sold the article in its rudest condition: the excise did not raise the price of malt, but lowered the price of barley. And this fact evinces, how much consumption was embarrassed, and circulation obstructed, during the distresses of the Revolution-war.

The annual value of the surplus produce of the land, and labour of England, which was then exported to foreign countries, amounted only to £. 4,086,087. Had the coins of England been as numerous as Davenant supposed them, they could not long have carried on a war, beyond the limits of the empire. And the cargoes, which were thus sent abroad, could not, from their inconsiderableness, have filled a mighty void, for any length of years.

\* Davenant's Essay on Ways and Means.

The tonnage of English shipping, that were annually employed for the exportation of the before-mentioned cargoes, amounted only to 190,533 tons; which, if we allow them to have been navigated, at the rate of twelve mariners to every two hundred tons, required only 11,432 sailors; yet, this was the principal nursery, whence the navy of England could alone be manned, during the wars of King William.

The following statement will give us ideas, sufficiently accurate, of the progressive force of the royal fleet:

	Tons.		Sailors
Which, in 1660 carried	62,594	- -	—
in 1675 - -	69,681	- -	30,951
in 1688 - -	101,032	- -	—
in 1695 - -	112,400	- -	45,000
	<hr/>		<hr/>

Such, then, was the naval force that, during the hostilities of William, could be sent into the line against the potent navy of France, which, in one busy reign, had been created, and raised to greatness. It was found almost impossible to man the fleet, though the admiralty were empowered by Parliament, to lay strict embargoes on the merchants ships\*. And this alone, ought to give us a lesson,

\* Sir J. Dalrymple, has published a paper [Appendix, p. 242.] in order to justify King William from the charge—“ of not exerting the natural strength of England, in a sea-war against France, after the battle of La Hogue;” which proves,



a lesson, of what importance it is to the state, to augment the native race of carpenters, and sailors, by every possible means.

The great debility of England, during the war of the Revolution, arose from the practice of hoarding, in times of distrust, which prevented circulation; from the disorders of the coin, that greatly augmented the former evil, while the government issued tallies of wood, for the supplying of specie; from the inability of the people to pay taxes, while they could find no circulating value, either

proves, that his ministers thought it impossible to increase the fleet;—"as not having ships enough, nor men, unless we stop even the craft-trade." There are a variety of documents, in the Plantation-office, which demonstrate the same position. And see the subjoined comparative view of the fleets of France, and of England, in 1693.

The following "Comparison of the French, and English fleets, in 1693, formed from lists brought into the House of Commons, by Secretary Trenchard," will shew, how nearly equal they were in force, even subsequent to the victory of La Hogue, in the preceding year. [Bibl. Harley, Brit. Museum, No. 1,898.]

Ships from	French Fleet.			English Fleet.			Difference.	
	At Brest.	At Toulon.	Total.	In being.	Build- ing.	Total.	More.	Less.
40 to 50 guns	- 3	5	8.	- 31	0	31.	- 23	0
50 to 60 -	- 10	4	14.	- 7	1	8.	- 0	6.
60 to 70 -	- 23	9	32.	- 14	3	17.	- 0	15.
70 to 80 -	- 13	3	16.	- 23	2	25.	- 9	0.
80 to 90 -	- 7	1	8.	- 8	6	14.	- 6	0.
90 to 100 -	- 6	4	10.	- 11	0	11.	- 1	0.
100 to 108	- 6	1	7.	- 5	0	5.	- 0	2.
	<u>68</u>	<u>27</u>	<u>95.</u>	<u>99</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>111.</u>	<u>- 39</u>	<u>23.</u>



for their labour, or property: add to these, the turbulence of the lower orders, and the treachery of the great. And, above all, if we may believe the ministers of King William \*, *Nobody knew one day what a House of Commons would do the next.*

From this review of the debility of England, we may, with the more propriety, inquire into the losses of our trade, during that distressful war. A more confirmed commerce could not have stood so rude a shock as our manufactures and commerce received, from the imbecility of friends, no less than from the vigour of foes, amidst a disastrous course of hostilities, of eight years continuance. And the clamours, which were in the end, justly raised against the managers of the marine, were assuredly founded in prodigious losses. An examination of the following proofs, will evince this inelancholy truth:

Years.	Ships cleared outwards.		Total.	Value of their Cargoes. £.
	Tons Eng.	D <sup>o</sup> foreign.		
1688 -	190,533 -	95,267 -	285,800 -	4,086,087
1696 -	91,767 -	83,024 -	174,791 -	2,729,520
<hr/>				
Annual loss	98,766 -	12,243 -	111,009 -	1,356,567
<hr/>				
The nett revenue of the posts, in			1688	£. 76,318
D <sup>o</sup> - - - - -			1697	58,672 †
			<hr/>	

Dr. Davenant took a different way to go to the same point, because he had not access to a better.

\* Dal. Mem. Appendix, p. 240.

† Mr. Asple's Transcript.

Having stated the yearly amount of the customs, from 1688 to 1695, inclusive, he inferred from the annual defalcations: "So, that it appears sufficiently, that in general, since this war, our trade is very much diminished, as, by a medium of seven years, the customs are lessened about £.138,707. 7s. a year." Dr. Davenant justly complained of the breaches of the Act of Navigation, "during the slack administration of this war;" so, that strangers seem to have beaten us out of our own ports. For, it was observed, that there were, in the Port of London,

	Tons English.		D <sup>o</sup> foreign.		Total.
During the year 1695 *	65,788	-	83,238	-	149,026

It would be injurious to conceal, that the same author, who seems, however, to have some-

\* If, with the year mentioned, by Davenant, we contrast the following years, we shall see an astonishing increase of the navigation, and commerce of London. Thus, there were entered in this great Port,

	Tons English.		D <sup>o</sup> foreign.		Total.
In 1710 - -	70,915 - -		40,280 - -		110,195
19 - -	187,122 - -		11,468 - -		198,590
58 - -	125,086 - -		69,050 - -		194,146
82 - -	210,656 - -		125,248 - -		335,904
83 - -	277,797 - -		169,170 - -		446,967
84 - -	372,775 - -		92,043 - -		464,818

The number of ships, which were registered, in the port of London, in the year ending the 30th Sept. 1793, was 1,886, carrying 378,787 tons.

times complained, without a cause, acknowledged,  
 “ That perhaps, no care, nor wisdom in the world,  
 “ could have fully protected our trade, during this  
 “ last war with France.”

An attentive examination of the numbers of our ships cleared outwards, and of the cargoes exported in them, will convince every candid mind, that in every war, there is a point of depression, in trade, as there is in all things, beyond which, it does not decline ; and from which, it gradually rises beyond the extent of its former greatness, unless it meet with additional checks. And the year 1694\* marked,

\* The following detail, from the Plantation-office, will give the reader a still clearer view of the navigation of England, during the embarrassments of the Revolution war.

Ships cleared Outwards.				Ships entered Inwards.			
	Tons	D <sup>o</sup>		Tons	D <sup>o</sup>		
	English.	foreign.	Total.	English.	foreign.	Total.	
1693	{ London,	44,912	- 59,750	- 104,662	36,512	- 80,875	- 117,387
	{ Outports,	73,176	- 28,752	- 101,928	32,616	- 27,876	- 60,492
	Total,	118,08	- 88,502	- 206,590	69,128	- 108,751	- 177,879
				Balance of Trade,	28,611		
					206,590		
1694	{ London,	39,648	- 41,500	- 81,148	59,472	- 76,500	- 135,972
	{ Outports,	33,408	- 28,224	- 61,632	35,158	- 28,910	- 64,068
	Total,	73,056	- 69,724	- 142,780	94,630	- 105,410	- 200,940
				Balance of Trade,	57,260		
					20,040		

marked, probably, the lowest state, to which the eight years hostilities, of that disastrous period, beat down the national traffic. But, the commerce of England, which is sustained by immense capitals, and inspired by a happy skill, and diligence, may be aptly compared to a spring of mighty powers, that always exerts its force, in proportion to the weight of its compression; and that never fails to rebound with augmented energy, when the pressure is removed, by the return of peace. It is, nevertheless, a fact, equally true, that however the cessation of war, may give fresh ardour to our industrious classes at home, and enable our merchants to export cargoes of unexampled extent, yet, there are never wanting writers, who, during this prosperous moment, complain of the decline of our manufactories, and the ruin of our trade. It is proposed, to illustrate both these facts, in the following sheets; because, from the illustration, we may derive both intelligence, and amusement.

Of the foregoing detail, it ought to be observed, that it does not appear in the Plantation-office altogether in this form: the number of ships, English, and foreign, entered either in London, and the outports, is only specified, and the average tonnage of each, thus particularly given: the English ships, in the port of London, were estimated at 112 tons each: the foreign, at 125 tons each: the English ships, at the outports, at 72 each; the foreign, at 98 tons each. Whence, the editor was enabled, by an easy calculation, to lay before the public, a more precise account of the commerce of England, during the war of the Revolution, than has yet been done.



Let us, then, attend to the following proofs :

	Tons Eng.	Ships cleared outwards.		Value of cargoe exported. £.
		D <sup>o</sup> foreign.	Total.	
Peace of Ryf- wick, 1697	144,264	- 100,524	- 244,788	- 3,525,907
1699	293,703	43,625	337,328	6,709,881
1700				
1701				

In addition to this satisfactory detail, let us consider the revenue of the post-office, which, shewing the extent of correspondence, at different periods, furnishes no bad proof of the progress of commerce. The nett income of the posts, according to an average of the eight years of King William's wars - - - - - £. 67,222

D<sup>o</sup> of the four years of subsequent

peace - - - - - 82,319\*

Yet, amidst all this prosperity, Pollexfen, one of the Board of Trade, published *a discourse* †, in 1697, in order to shew, "That, so great had been the losses of a seven years war, if a great stock be absolutely necessary to carry on a great trade, we may reasonably conclude, the stock of this nation is so diminished, it will fall short; and that, without prudence, and industry, we shall rather consume what is left, than recover what we have lost." Davenant, the antagonist of Pollexfen, stunned every

\* Mr. Asle's Transcript.

† Discourse on *Trade, Coin, and Paper Credit.*



coffee-house, at the same time, with his declamations, on the decay of commerce. "It will be a great matter, for the present," says he\*, "if we can recover the ground our trade has lost during the last war." But, we have seen, that we had already gained *superior ground*, at the precise moment, wherein he, in this manner, lamented our recent losses, both of shipping, and trade. So different are the deductions of theory, from the informations of experience, that temporary interruptions are constantly mistaken for symptoms of habitual decline. And our commercial writers, owing to this cause, are full of well-meaning falsehood, while they, sometimes, propagate purposed deception.

————— Phycic is their bane :  
 The learned Leaches in despair depart,  
 And shake their heads, *desponding* of their art.

The Revolution may justly be regarded, as an event in our annals, the most memorable, and interesting; because its effects have been the happiest, in respect to the security, the comfort, and prosperity, of the people. Yet it has, for some years, been insisted, with a plausibility, which precludes the charge of intended paradox, that every cause of depopulation—a *devouring capital*, the *waste of wars*, the *drain of standing armies*, *emigrations to the colonies*, the *engrossing of farms*, the in-

\* Discourse on Trade, 1698.

*closing of commons, the high price of provisions, and unbounded luxury*—all have concurred, since that fortunate æra, to dispeople the nation; the numbers of which, it is pretended, have decreased a million and a half, and still continue to decrease.

In opposition to such controvertists, it is not sufficient to argue, That, having traced a gradual advance in population, during six centuries of political distraction, and domestic misery, and proved an addition of more than four millions to the original stock, in 1066, notwithstanding wasteful wars, desolating famines, and habitual debility: we ought thence to infer, that the position of a *decreasing populousness*, during a period the most free, and prosperous, and happy, can alone be maintained, by the decisive proof of enumerations, or, at least, by a mode of induction, which is equal to them, in the weight of its inference. It is proposed, then, to continue a brief review of the principal occurrences, in our history, since the year 1688, that could have either carried on the former progress of our population, or have promoted a gradual decline.

The Revolution did not, indeed, produce so much any alteration in the forms of the constitution, as it changed the maxims of administration; which have, every where, so great an influence on the condition of the governed. Yet, from thence, a new æra is said \* to have commenced, in which the bounds

\* Blackst. Com. vol. i. p. 213.

of prerogative, and liberty, have been better defined, the principles of government more thoroughly examined, and understood, and the rights of the subject more explicitly guarded by legal provisions, than in any other period of the English history. One article, alone, in the Declaration of Rights, was worth, on account of the consolation, which it administered to the lower orders, the whole expence of the ensuing war: "That excessive bail shall not be required, or excessive fines be imposed, or cruel, and unusual, punishments be inflicted." Philosophers have, justly, remarked, that severity of chastisement has as natural a tendency to debase mankind, as mildness to elevate them. It was not so much from the declaration, *that the levying money, without consent of Parliament, is unlawful*, that private property was secured, as from the impartial administration of justice, which has regularly flowed from the independence of the Judges. Anderson\* did not forget to give "a brief view of the establishment of that free constitution, as it did certainly contribute, greatly, in its consequences, to the advancement of our industry, manufactures, commerce, and shipping, as well as of our riches, and people, notwithstanding several expensive, and bloody, wars."

The hearth-money was soon after taken away; "being a great oppression (say the Parliament) of the poorer sort, and a badge of slavery upon the

\* Chron. Acc. of Com. vol. ii. p. 189.—95.

whole." During the same session, the first bounty was given on the exportation of corn: "How much," says that laborious writer, "this bounty has contributed to the improvement of husbandry, is too obvious to be disputed:" and, accordingly, the year 1699, has been noticed as the epoch of the last great dearth of corn in England. A flourishing agriculture must have, necessarily, promoted populousness, in two respects; by offering encouragement to labour; by furnishing a supply of provisions, at once constant and cheap, which were both extremely irregular, in former times. The act of toleration, which was, at the same time, passed, by "giving ease to scrupulous consciences," tended to promote our industry, and traffic, and consequently the progress of population: for, we may learn of Sir Josiah Child, how many people had been driven out of England, from the rise of the Puritans, in the reign of Elizabeth, to the blessed æra of toleration.

On the other hand, it has been already shewn how much the eight-years war, which grew out of the Revolution, distressed the foreign trade of England. As King William employed, chiefly, the troops of other nations; as the profligate, and the idle, principally recruited the army; as humanity now softened the rigours of war; it may be justly doubted, if we lost a greater number, by the miseries of the camp, than were acquired by the arrival of refugees, who, during that period, sought security in England. And, of this opinion, was  
Doctor



Doctor Davenant\*, who was no unconcerned spectator of those eventful times. Yet, it is a known fact, that the taxes, which were successively imposed, did not produce, in proportion to their augmentations. And if we attribute this unfavourable circumstance to the inability, and pressures, of the people, more than to the novelty of contributions, to the enmity of many against the new government, and to the disorders of the coin, we ought, undoubtedly, to infer, that the imposition of additional burdens necessarily stopped the progress of numbers. The average price of wheat, from 1692 to 1699, was nearly *eight shillings the bushel*, according to Fleetwood. There have been terrible years *dearths* of corn, said Swift, and every place is strewed with beggars; but *dearths* are common in better climates, and our evils here lie much deeper.

Nevertheless, internal traffic flourished in the mean time. In 1689, the manufactures of copper, and brass, were revived, rather than introduced. The sword-blade company, which settled in Yorkshire, “brought † over foreign workmen.” The French refugees improved the fabricks of paper, and of silk, especially the lutestrings, and alamodes; which were so much encouraged by Parliament, that the weavers, being greatly increased in numbers, as well as in insolence, before the year 1697, raised a tumult in London, against

\* Vol. iii, p. 369.

† And. Chron. Acc. of Com. vol. ii. p. 192.



the wearers of East-India manufactures\*. The establishment of the Bank of England, in 1694, by facilitating public, and private, circulation, produced all the salutary effects, that were originally foretold, because it has been, constantly, managed with a prudence, integrity, and caution, which have never been exceeded. By giving encouragement to fisheries, in 1695, a hardy race must have been greatly multiplied; and by encouraging, in 1696, the making of linens, subsistence was given to the young, and the old.

The conclusion of every lengthened war, deprives many men of support, who are, therefore, obliged to re-enter once more into the competitions of the world. Yet, Doctor Davenant † assured the Marquis of Normanby, in 1699, “that we really want people, and hands, to carry on the woollen and linen manufactories together.” Admitting the truth of an assertion, of which, indeed, there is no reason to doubt, the observation is, altogether, consistent with facts, and with principles. In less than two years, from the peace of Ryswick, the disbanded idlers had been all engaged in the manufactories, which we have seen established; and in the foreign traffic, that has been shewn to have flourished so greatly from this epoch, to the demise of King William. Now, what does the position of Davenant prove, more, than that uncommon

\* And. Chron. Acc. of Com. vol. ii. p. 220.

† Essay on East-India Trade, p. 46.

demand never fails to produce remarkable scarcity, till a sufficient supply has been found? And Sir Josiah Child was therefore induced, a hundred years ago, to lay it down as a maxim; *Such as our employment is for people, so many will our people be.* Were we now to compare the circumstance, mentioned by Sir John Dalrymple, of the raising of three-and-twenty regiments in six weeks, during the year 1689, with the fact, stated by Doctor Davenant, "of the scarcity of hands," in 1699, we ought to infer, that an alteration of manners, owing to whatever cause, had, in the mean time, taken place; and that the lower orders of men had learned, from experience, to prefer the gainful employments of peace to the less profitable, and more dangerous, adventures of war.

Yet, admitting that the *moral causes* before-mentioned had naturally produced an augmentation of numbers, during the reign of William, we ought here to remark, that the people who chiefly shared in the felicities, or were incommoded by the factions of those times, must have drawn their first breath prior to the Revolution: the middle-aged, and the old, who enacted the laws, and as ministers, or magistrates, carried them into execution, must have been born, during the distractions of the civil wars, or amid the contests of the administration of Charles I.: and the gallant youth, who fought by the side of King William, must have first seen the light soon after the Restoration.

But, it ought here to be stated, as a circumstance,

stance, which may be supposed to have checked the progress of population, that there had been actually raised, though with some difficulty, on nearly seven millions of people, in thirteen years \* - - - - £. 58,698,688. 19s. 8d.;

If we average this sum, by the number of years, we shall gain a pretty exact idea of King William's annual income, - - - - £. 4,415,360;

And if, from this, we deduct King

James's revenue, - - - - 2,061,856;

The balance of augmentation will be £. 2,453,504

The principal of the public debt,

on the 31st of December, 1697,

was, - - - - - £. 21,515,743;

whereon was paid an annual interest

of, - - - - - £. 1,246,376.

And, these facts shew how much more the people were burthened in the latter, than in the former, reign.

It has, nevertheless, been proved, that manufactures flourished in the mean time; that there was a great demand for labour; that the foreign traffic, and navigation of England, doubled, from the peace of Ryswick, to the accession of Queen Anne. For, the re-coinage of the silver, mean time, produced an exhilarating effect on industry, in the same proportion as the debasement of the current

\* Mr. Aftle's Transcript.

coin is always disadvantageous, to the lower orders, and dishonourable to the state. The revival of public credit, after the peace of Ryswick, and the rising of the notes of the Bank of England to par, strengthened private confidence, at the same time, that these causes invigorated our manufactures, and our trade. And, the spirit of population was still more animated, by the many acts of naturalization, which were readily passed, during every session, in the reign of William; and which clearly evince, how many industrious foreigners found shelter, in England, from the persecution of countries, less tolerant and free



## CHAP. V.

*The War of Queen Anne.—The Strength of the Nation.—The Losses of Trade.—The Revival of Trade.—Complaints of its Decline.—The Laws of Queen Anne, for promoting the Commercial Interests of the Nation.—The Union.—Reflections.*

A NEW war, still more bloody, and glorious, than the former, ensued on the accession of Queen Anne. All Europe either hated the impiousness, or dreaded, at length, the power of Lewis XIV. But, it was his “owning and declaring the pretended prince of Wales to be king of England, Scotland, and Ireland,” which was the avowed cause of the hostilities of Great-Britain against France ; though private motives have generally more influence than public pretences. When her treasurer sat down to calculate the cost, he found resources in his own prudence. Her general saw armies, and alliances, rise out of his own genius for war, and negotiation. And both estimated right, since a favourable change had gradually taken place, in the spirit, as well as in the abilities of the people.

If



If we inquire more minutely, into the national strength, we shall find, that England, and Wales, now contained about - - 1,700,000 fighting men.

The Union with Scotland,  
added to these about - 325,000

So, the united kingdom  
contained - - - 2,025,000

But troops, without money, to carry them to war, with all that soldiers require, are of little avail. And happy is it, for this nation, at least, that there is a successive rise, in the accumulations of our wealth, in the same manner, as we have already seen, there is a continual progress in our population; owing to the various means, which individuals constantly use, to meliorate their own condition. There can be little doubt, then, though Gregory King supposed the contrary, that the productive capital, and annual gains of the people, were greater, at the accession of Anne, than they had been, during the preceding reign\*, or in any former period.

Godol-

\* After so expensive a war just ended, says Anderson, it gave foreigners a high idea of the wealth and grandeur of England, to see *two millions sterling* subscribed for in *three days*, (by the new East India Company in 1698) and there were persons ready to subscribe as much more: For, although since

Godolphin, and Marlborough, had not to contend with the embarrassments, of their immediate predecessors. The disorders of the coin, which had so enfeebled the late administration, had been perfectly cured, by the great re-coinage of the last reign. The high interest, which had been given, and the still higher profit, that was made, by purchasing government-securities, had drawn, meanwhile, much of the hoarded cash within the circle of commerce. No less than £. 3,400,000 of hammered money, which had been equally locked up, were brought into action, according to Davenant, by the act for suppressing it, in 1697. The Bank of England now lent its aid, by facilitating loans, and circulating exchequer bills. And the public debts, and additional taxes, filled circulation, at present, and gave it activity; as they had equally produced similar effects, when the Long Parliament opened the coffers of England. Owing to all those causes, the statesmen of the reign of Anne, borrowed money at five *per cent.* in 1702, and never gave more than six, during the war; which alone shews, how the condition of this country had happily changed, from the time, that seven and eight *per cent.* were paid, only a few years before.

that time, higher proofs have appeared, of the great riches of this nation, because our wealth is very visibly increased; yet, till then, continues he, there had never been so illustrious an instance of England's opulence. [Chron. Com. vol. ii. p. 223.]

The

The principal of the public debt, on the 31st of December 1701, amounted to - £. 16,394,701;

whereon was paid an annual interest  
of - - - - - 1,109,123.

The taxes yielded nett into the exchequer, during the year 1701 - £. 3,769,375.

Of this inconsiderable revenue the current services for the navy absorbed

- - - £. 1,046,397

the land service - - 425,998

the ordnance - - 49,940

the civil list - - 704,339

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2,226,674

There were applied to the payment of the principal, and interest, of

debts - - - - - 1,411,912

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3,638,586

Balance remaining unapplied - - - 130,789

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\* £. 3,769,375.

The nett sums paid into the exchequer, during the year 1703, from the customs, excise, post-office, land, and miscellaneous duties - £. 5,561,944:

\* Mr. Aftle's Transcript.

Of this sum, there were issued, for  
 carrying on the war £.3,666,430  
 For paying the civil list - 589,981  
 the interest of loans - 430,307  
 Balance remaining, for  
 the payment of loans,  
 and other services - - 875,226  
 ————— \* £.5,561,944.

The taxes, which were annually levied, on the people, during the present reign, may be calculated, from the nett sums paid into the exchequer, in the years 1707—8—9—10, amounting, yearly, to £.5,272,758. This gives us an idea sufficiently precise of the pecuniary powers, which could then be exerted by Britain. But, the military operations of the government, were more extensive, than the annual supplies of the parliament: So that, before Christmas 1711, unfunded debts were contracted to the amount of £.9,471,325. This sum, was then too large, as it is said, to be borrowed, at any rate. The public creditors agreed to convert their claims into a capital, at a specified interest, with charges of management. And here is the origin, of the South Sea Company, and South Sea Stock, which, whatever help they now brought with them, in after times, were perverted to very distressful projects.

\* Mr. Aisle's Transcript.

The



The supplies, granted during the present reign, amounted to - - - £.69,815,457. 11s. 3½*d.*

The expences of the war, as they were stated, by the commissioners of public accounts, amounted to - - - - - £.65,853,799. 8s. 7½*d.* \*

And the national debt swelled, before the 31st December 1714, to - £.50,644,306. 13s. 6¼*d.*; on which was paid, an interest of † £.2,811,903. 10s. 5½*d.* and which were all more than counter-balanced, by the legislative encouragements, that were given, in this reign, to domestic industry, and foreign trade.

The surplus produce of our land, and labour, which was yearly exported, had, mean time, risen to £.6,045,432; a circumstance, which equally evinces, that we had not yet much to spare; and consequently no vast remittance, which could be annually sent abroad, for carrying on the war.

The tonnage of English ships, which, from time to time, transported this cargo, and which, at that epoch, formed the principal nursery for the royal navy, had increased to - 273,693 tons; this shipping must have been navigated, if we allow twelve men to every two hundred tons, by - - 16,422 sailors.

By an enumeration † of the trading vessels, of England, in January 1701, it appeared, that

\* Camp. Pol. Survey, vol. ii. p. 543.

† Hist. of Debt, p. 80; which gives a particular statement.

‡ A detail in the Plantation-office.



London had - - - 84,882 tons,

The out-ports had 176,340

----- 261,222 ; and  
that they were navigated by 16,471 men, and  
120 boys, or 16,591 sailors.

The inconsiderable difference, between the enumerated tonnage and mariners, and the tonnage and mariners, cleared at the custom-house, only marks, that several ships had entered, more than once, and that, a greater number of men were then allowed to every vessel, than there are now ; whence we may infer, that the calculation, and the enumeration, prove the accuracy of each other.

The royal navy, which, in	Tons.	Men.
1695, had carried - - -	112,000	and 45,000,
had mouldered, before		
1704 *, to - - -	104,754	— 41,000

\* An admiralty-list, of all her Majesty's ships, and vessels, in sea-pay, at home and abroad, on the 27th of February 1703-4, with the highest complement of men, and the numbers borne, mustered, and wanting. [From the Paper-office.]

Number of ships.	Rates.
5 — of — 2	
40 — — — 3	
57 — — — 4	
33 — — — 5	
16 — — — 6,	besides fire-ships, bombs,

and smaller vessels, all which

	Complement of Men.	Borne.	Mustered.
Contained	46,745	— 39,720	— 30,778
Wanting	—	— 7,025	— 15,967

Its

Its real force will, however, more clearly appear, from the following detail \* :

Ships of the line employ-

ed in - -	1702 -	74	in	1707 -	72
	1703 -	79	—	1708 -	69
	1704 -	74	—	1709 -	67
	1705 -	79	—	1710 -	62
	1706 -	78	—	1711 -	59
	<u>      </u>	<u>      </u>		<u>      </u>	<u>      </u>

Such, then, was the augmented strength of the nation, under Queen Anne. Let us now inquire into the losses of our trade, during her glorious, but unproductive, war.

The effort of the belligerent powers, was made chiefly by land; and the foreign trade, of England, seems to have rather languished, than to have been overpowered, as it had been, for a season, during the preceding contest. Let us examine the following proofs :

Years,	Ships cleared outwards.			Value of cargoes.
	Tons English.	Do foreign.	Total.	£.
1700	273,693	43,635	317,328	6,045,432
1				
2				
1705	————	————	————	5,308,966
1709	243,693	45,625	289,318	5,913,357
1711	266,047	57,890	323,937	5,962,988
1712	326,620	29,115	355,735	6,868,840
	————	————	————	————

\* Philips's State of the Nation, p. 35.

The revenue of the post-office\*, on an average of the four last years of

William, yielded nett - - - - - £.82,319  
Ditto, of the four first years of the war - 61,568

Thus, the year 1705 marked the lowest stage of the depression of commerce, during Queen Anne's wars; whence it gradually rose till 1712, the last year of hostilities, when our navigation, and traffic, had gained a manifest superiority, over those of any former period of peace.

Let us behold the rebound of this mighty spring, when the return of tranquillity had removed every pressure, by contrasting the average of the ships, cleared outwards, and of the value of their cargoes, during the three peaceful years, preceding the war, with both, during the three years immediately following the treaty of Utrecht.

Years.	Ships cleared outwards.			Value of cargoes.
	Tons English.	Do foreign.	Total.	£.
1699	293,703	43,625	337,328	6,709,881
1700				
1				
1713	421,431	26,573	448,004	7,696,573
14				
15				

\* Mr. Astle's Transcript.

The nett annual revenue * of the post-office, according to an average of the years 1707—8—9—10	- - - -	£. 58,052
Ditto, on an average † of the years 1711—12—13—14	- - - -	90,223

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At the moment of this marvellous advance, in manufactures, traffic, and industry, the people were taught to believe, that these blessings scarcely existed among them. “Our trade,” said Mr. William Wood, to King George I. ‡ “was then expiring; our foreign commerce, in many parts, entirely lost, and, in general, suspended; what little was left us was become too precarious to be called ours.” And, in the encomiastic style of his dedication, he attributed our regeneration from “the lost condition our trade was then in, to his Majesty’s timely accession.” The ministers of this monarch did little honour to themselves, by in-

\* Mr. Astle’s Transcript.

† And. Chron. Com. vol. ii. p. 266: But, the office had been now extended to every dominion of the crown, and the rates of postage, augmented one-third, from 1710. The post-office revenue, says Anderson, is a kind of *politico-commercial pulse* of a nation’s prosperity, or decline.

‡ Wood’s Dedication of *The Survey of Trade*. This was not the same William Wood, who obtained the patent for coining Irish halfpence, which procured him so much celebration, by Swift; but it was the William Wood, who was, afterwards, appointed to the office of Secretary to the Commissioners of the Customs.

citing



citing all that clamour, or by propagating so much factious falsehood. It was not the peace of Utrecht, which promoted the unexampled prosperity of our commercial affairs; but, it was *peace*. Yet, said Archibald Hutchinson, in 1720, *It is too well known, and a sad truth it is, that the balance of trade, has been, for some time, against us.* The cause, why *declamations* prevail so greatly, said Hooker, is, for that men suffer themselves to be deluded.

The public revenue, had now been divided into the *established income*, as the inland duties, the excise, and the customs: and into *annual grants*, as the malt, and the land taxes. The inland duties, consisting, at the demise of the Queen, of fifteen distinct heads, were all managed, by distinct commissioners, and may be estimated, at the yearly amount of £.453,002, from an average of the years 1707—8—9—10. The excise, properly so called, and collected, under the peculiar management of the commissioners of excise, consisted of twenty-seven different articles, and may be calculated, from the same average, at £.1,629,245, including the duty on malt. And we may thence determine, how much it may have obstructed labour, and checked the progress of population. The nett customs, arising from our imports, and exports, consisted then, of forty-one different branches, and may be calculated from a fifteen years average, from 1700, to 1714 inclusive, to have amounted to £.1,352,764 \*.

\* Philips's State of the Nation.

Having enumerated "that sad detail of taxes," the historian of our debts exclaims: "Can we wonder at the decay of our commerce, under such circumstances? Should not we rather wonder that we have any left?" But, what regard is there due to a general inference, in opposition to authentic facts? It has been already demonstrated that, in no former effluxion of time, did the manufactures, and trade of England, flourish so much, or amount to so large an extent, as at the demise of Queen Anne, notwithstanding the greatness of our imposts, and the immensity of our debts. And, when we consider, too, that the taxes had produced abundantly, we may, from these decisive circumstances, certainly conclude, that the war had little incommoded the industrious classes; and that the principle of procreation exerted its powers, while an attentive diligence preserved a numerous progeny, by furnishing the constant means of subsistence, while there was a vast export of corn, owing to its cheapness at home.

Whoever examines the laws of Queen Anne, with a view to this subject, must be of opinion, that they all tended to promote the commercial interests, and local improvements, of the nation, as such interests were then understood. In this reign, there were acts of Parliament passed,

For encouraging shipping, and foreign trade -	17
For promoting manufactures - - - - -	5
For roads, churches, bridges, and paving - -	26
For piers, harbours, &c. - - - - -	10
For inclosures, and agricultural improvements	8
For the management of the poor - - - -	5
<hr/>	
For all these useful purposes - - -	71
<hr/>	

But, the union of the two kingdoms, is the glory, and ought to be the boast, of her reign. The incorporation of two independent legislatures has proved equally advantageous to both countries, whether we regard the interests of the state, or the happiness of the governed. When we consider the weakness, which resulted from the ancient inroads of the Scotch, and the danger of future separation, we must allow, that this conjunction was worth, to England, almost any price. And the compression of the hearts, and hands, of two divided nations, gave an elasticity, and vigour, to the united kingdoms, which, separately, neither had ever attained. If, as communities, so much strength, and felicity, were derived from the Union, the Scottish people, as individuals at least, were still greater gainers, from this association of interests, and affections. Freed from the tyranny of the nobles, by being admitted into a political system more liberal than their own, the people of Scotland, thenceforth, enjoyed the same privileges, as similar ranks, in England, had long derived, from fortunate events,

or wise institutions. And, invested with the same benefits of commerce, the Scotch meliorated their agriculture, improved their manufactures, extended their trade, and acquired an opulence, which, as a people, separate, and overshadowed, they had not, for ages, accomplished. The acquisitions of both happily proved advantageous to each. And, while the English busily cultivated the peculiar arts of peace, the Scotch were brought, by a wise policy, from their mountains, the natural nursery of warriors, to fight the national battles of both.

From the epoch of the Union, the same salutary regulations promoted equally the prosperity, and populousness, of Great Britain. Among these Anderson \* has recorded the useful revival, in 1710, of the ancient assize of bread, and ale, [1266]; because "it was so necessary for our labourers, and artificers, as well as for all other people." Whatever number of lives were lost, during the wars of William, and Anne, it seems certain, says that industrious compiler, "that the artificers of England did irreparable damage, in the mean time, to the French, by robbing them of many of their best manufactures, wherewith they had before supplied almost all Europe."

The foregoing details, cast a just censure on the furious party-contests, during the last years of Queen Anne, in respect to the condition of our commerce; as if the prosperity, or the ruin of

\* Chron. Com. vol. ii. p. 251.



manufactories, and trade, were influenced by the continuance of statesmen in the possession of emolument, or in the expectation of power. The husbandman, and the sailor, only look for employment, the mechanic and the merchant, only inquire for customers, without caring, who are their rulers, since they seldom gain from the contests of the great, and certainly know, that they enjoy protection from the administration of justice, and from the operation of law.

## CHAP. VI.

*Foreign Disputes of George I.—The State of the Nation.—Observations.—The Progress of Commerce; and Shipping.—Complaints of a Decline of Trade.—Industry, and traffic, encouraged.—Remarks.*

WHILE George I. who ascended the throne, in 1714, was, in secret, little anxious about the enjoyment of his crown, amid the clash of domestic parties, he engaged, successively, in contests with almost every European power; because each, in its turn, had given protection to the Pretender to his rights.

But, the foreign disputes of this reign were short, as well as unexpensive: And they did not, therefore, call forth the whole force of the kingdom; which may be deduced in the following manner.

If the current of population continued its progress, as we have seen it did, to the commencement of the present reign, the fighting men must necessarily have amounted, during the time of George I. to two millions and fifty thousand. And the effective wealth of the country, there is reason to think, had accumulated meanwhile in a still greater proportion; from preceding encouragements, and the augmentation of capitals.

H

Owing

Owing to the increase of circulation, which enables the opulent to convert so easily land into coin, or coin into land, and to the accumulation too of moveable property, the interest of money began to fall towards the end of King William's reign, when no great balance of trade flowed into the kingdom. And the natural interest continuing low, even amid the pressures of the subsequent war, the Parliament enacted, in 1713, that the legal interest should not rise higher than five *per cent.* after September 1714. Thus England, while she was yet embarrassed with the never-failing consequences of war, gained "that abatement of interest, by law," which Sir Josiah Child rather too fondly insisted, during the preceding age, would produce so many benefits to his country: *The advance of the price of lands in the purchase; the improvement of the rent of farms; the employment of the poor; the multiplication of artificers; the increase of foreign trade; and the augmentation of the stocks of people.* The natural interest of money fell to three *per cent.* in the reign of George I. while the government seldom borrowed at more than four.

The practice of borrowing, on behalf of the state, had commenced with the pressures of King William's reign. This policy was continued, and extended, during the wars of Anne. But, in the time of her successor, the contract between the government, and the lenders, was not so much made, as in preceding times, for the repayment  
of

of the principal, as for an annuity, instead of interest.

The nation had thus contracted a debt, before the 31st of December, 1714, of - £. 50,644,307;

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to pay the interest of which required, from the land and labour of this kingdom, yearly - - £. 2,811,904.

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It ought to be remembered, however, that this debt was due by the nation, in its collective capacity; but, that individual creditors had acquired a vast capital in it, of the more importance to them, and the public; as, besides yielding an annual profit, it was equally commodious as coin, for all the uses of life; since it could be easily pledged, or transferred. And land-owners were, thereby, enabled to improve their estates, manufacturers to carry on their business, traders to extend our commerce, and every one to pay their taxes. If by this debt, and by this annuity, the state was somewhat embarrassed, the industrious classes derived, probably, some advantage from the active motion, which was thereby given to the circulating value of all things. Yet, if the people received no positive benefit, they were, at least, enabled, by this facility, to sustain actual burdens, with greater ease.

While taxes were, without rigour, collected from annual income, and not from productive capital,



pital, a financial operation was performed, in 1716, which gradually relieved the embarrassments of the state, and gave fresh vigour to *circulation*, that energetic principle of commercial times. All those taxes, which had, from time to time, been granted for the payment of various annuities, were, at once, made perpetual, and directed to be paid into three great funds. The interest of the public debts was reduced from six *per cent.* to five. And whatever surpluses might remain, after paying this liquidated interest, were ordered to be thrown into a fourth fund, which was thenceforth called *the sinking fund*; because it was designed to pay off the principal, and interest, of such debts, as had been contracted, before Christmas 1716.

So productive were the taxes, owing to the prosperity of the people, that those surpluses amounted, before the end of the reign of George I. to £.1,083,190\*. And those surpluses would have made the country still more prosperous, had the sinking fund been constantly applied, as it was thus originally designed; by keeping circulation full and overflowing, and thereby preventing what is commonly deplored, as *a scarcity of money*.

Notwithstanding that salutary operation, and our manufactures and trade were, at the same time, greatly encouraged, the capital of the public debts amounted to nearly as much at the demise of George I. as it had been at his accession, though the annuity, payable on them, was by those means

\* Exchequer account, in the History of Debts.

somewhat reduced; as appears by the following statement: The principal of the national debt was, on the

31st of December, 1714 £. 53,681,076; the interest thereon £. 2,811,904.  
 Do on 31st Dec. 1727 52,092,235; Ditto - 2,363,564.

The intermediate dimi- nution - - - - }	£. 1,588,841	- - - - -	£. 448,340
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We shall, however, gain a more adequate notion, not only of the public revenue, and burdens, but of the resources of the nation, from the following detail:

The net excise, according to a me- dium of four years, ending at Mi- chaelmas, 1726, (exclusive of the malt-tax) - - -	£. 1,927,354	
The net annual customs	1,530,361	
Various, and promiscuous internal taxes - -	666,459	
Total appropriated	£. 4,124,174	
The land-tax at 2s. in the pound, was given for	£. 1,000,000	
Malt - duty brings in £. 680,000, but is gi- ven for - - - -	750,000	
Raised by lottery - -	750,000	
Total annual grants for current services	2,500,000	

Net annual revenue	- - -	£. 6,624,175
Charges of collection	- - -	600,000

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The gross sum raised, yearly, on the people	- - - - -	£. 7,224,175
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The public expenditure was as follows:

Interest of a debt of £. 50,793,555*, including the surplus of the civil list, which is £. 3,678 <i>per annum</i> , £. 2,240,985		
The civil list	- - -	800,000
		<hr/> 3,040,985
Surplus of the sinking fund	-	1,083,190
The current services of the army, navy, &c.	- - - - -	2,500,000
The annual charges, with current services	- - - - -	6,624,175
Salaries, and other charges, at least,		600,000
		<hr/>
Gross sum annually applied	-	£. 7,224,175

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The value of the surplus products of the land, and labour, of England, after domestic consumption, was fully supplied, amounted, yearly, at the accession of George I. to £. 8,008,068; which

\* But, according to James Postlethwayt's History of the Public Revenue, the national debt, on the 31st of December, 1726, was £. 52,771,005; whereon was paid an annuity of £. 2,562,217.

formed a much larger cargo than had ever been exported before. And, from this circumstance, we might infer, that there was now employed a greater capital in trade than, by means of its productive employment, had, in any prior age, promoted the wealth and greatness of Britain.

The English shipping, which exported that vast cargo, at the accession of George I. had then increased to - - - - - 444,843 tons; which must have been navigated, if we allow twelve mariners to every two hundred tons, by - 26,691 men.

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The royal navy, which had been principally left by Queen Anne, carried in 1715 - - - - - 167,596 tons. Wood stated \* the amount of the navy, in 1721, at - - - - - 158,233 tons:

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which, said he, is more than in 1688, by 57,201 tons; and more than in 1660, by 95,639.

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Notwithstanding the boasts of Wood, and the glory acquired by defeating the Spanish fleet, in 1718, it is apparent, that the navy had lately sustained a diminution of - - - - - 9,363 tons.

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\* Survey of Trade, p. 55.



Having said thus much, with regard to the strength of Britain, let us now examine the losses of our trade, from the petty wars of the present reign; which seem not, indeed, to have much interrupted the foreign commerce of the kingdom, while salutary regulations excited the domestic industry of the people.

Owing, probably, to a complication of causes, the traffic, and navigation, of England, appear to have struggled with their oppressions, during this reign, but never to have risen much superior to the amount of both, in the year of the accession of George I. The following details offer sufficient proofs of the truth of this representation :

Years.	Ships cleared Outwards.			Value of Cargoes.	
	Tons English.	D <sup>o</sup> foreign.	Total.	£.	
1714	444,843	- 33,950	- 478,793	- 8,008,068	
15	406,392	- 19,508	- 425,900	- 6,922,263	
16	438,816	- 17,493	- 456,309	- 7,049,992	
<hr/>					
1718	427,962	- 16,809	- 444,771	- 6,361,390	
23	392,643	- 27,040	- 419,683	- 7,395,908	
<hr/>					

We shall see, however, a progress, if we contrast the averages of our navigation, and trade, at the beginning, and at the end, of George I's reign; and if we also recollect, that the business of 1726, and 1727, was somewhat interrupted by war, or by preparations for war.

Ships

Years.	Ships cleared Outwards.			Value of Cargoes.	
	Tons English.	D <sup>o</sup> foreign.	Total.	£.	
1713 } 14 } 15 }	421,431 - 26,573 - 448,004			7,696,573	
1726 } 27 } 28 }	432,832 - 23,651 - 456,483			7,891,739	

During this progress there were, however, “*a general complaint and concern of the nation, on the subject of a decline of trade\**.” Joshua Gee published, in 1729, his treatise, which, in order “to shew the wounds our commerce, and manufactures, had received, he put into the hands of the ministers, of the King, the Queen, and the Prince†.” When Erasmus Philips wrote his *State of the Nation*, in 1725‡, he found “some men so gloomy, that they thought us in a worse condition than we really are, and that it would be impossible to pay off the public debts; since all this pomp is nothing but false lustre; as we owe more than we are worth; as our money is diminished; and as we have little left but paper credit.” Against this contemporaneous declamation, which shews that man, in every age, utters his lamentations in a similar tone, Philips stated, what experience has shewn to have been undoubtedly true, the *certain proofs* of the

\* Wood’s Survey.

† Gee’s Dedication.

‡ Preface to *The State of the Nation*; which, as well as *Wood’s Survey*, was dedicated to the King, according to the practice of the times.

*prosperity*

*prosperity and opulence of a country; great numbers of industrious people; a rich commonalty; money at low interest; and land at a great value.*

Nevertheless, there were assuredly events, during the reign of George I. which cast a gloom over the nation, and obstructed general prosperity. The persecutions of the great, on the accession of a new family, which were followed by the tumults of the mean, ought to give a lesson of moderation; since they were attended with no good consequences to the state. The subsequent rebellion of 1715 brought with it a twelvemonth of distraction, without leaving the terrors of example. And the war with Spain, in 1718, obstructed our Mediterranean commerce, as every war with that kingdom must continue to do, while Gibraltar, the great cause of hostilities, remains, and bids the Spaniards defiance. But, it was the infamous year, 1720, which diverted all classes to projects and bubbles, that ought to be blotted from our annals, if they did not form remarkable beacons to direct our future course.

Of this reign it is the characteristic, that, though in no period were there so many laws enacted, for promoting domestic and foreign trade, yet, at no time did both prosper less, during those days of captious peace, rather than avowed hostilities. The treaty of commerce, with Spain, in 1715, must have inspired our traders with fresh vigour. The law which, in 1718, prohibited any British subject from carrying on traffic to the East, under  
foreign

foreign commissions, turned their ardour upon more invigorating objects, by preventing productive capital from being sent abroad. The measure of allowing the exportation of *British-made linen, duty free*, in 1717, gave us a manufacture, which is said, even then, to have employed many thousands of the poor. And the fisheries were encouraged by bounties, which must have multiplied the important race of our mariners.

The salutary laws, which were made for inciting domestic industry, were, doubtless, more efficacious in the subsequent reign, than they were felt, in any great degree, during the present. The manufactories of iron, of brass, and of copper, being considered as the third in extent, since they employed, *as it is said*, in 1719, two hundred and thirty thousand persons, were promoted with the attention, which was due to their importance. The continued encouragement, that had been given to the fabrics of silk, and the erection of the vast machine of Lomb, in 1719, had raised the annual value of this manufacture to £. 700,000, in 1722, more, as it is stated, than it had yielded, at the Revolution.

But, the year 1722 must always form an epoch, as memorable for a great operation in commercial policy, as the establishment of the sinking fund, had been in finance, a few years before. The Parliament had, indeed, in 1672, withdrawn the duties, which were then payable by *aliens*, on the exportation of *our-own* manufactures. This salutary principle



principle was still more extended in 1700, by removing the imposts on every kind of woollen goods, that should be thereafter sent abroad. It was, however, by the law *for the further encouragement of manufactures*, that every one was allowed to export, *duty free*, all merchandizes, the produce of Great Britain, except only such articles, as should be deemed *materials* of manufacture; while drugs, and other goods used for dyeing, were equally permitted to be imported *duty free*. And other facilities were, at the same time, given to trade, whilst the fisheries were promoted by bounties.

After enumerating all preceding measures of encouragement, Anderson\* remarks in 1727, that nothing can more obviously demonstrate the amazing increase of England's commerce, in less than two centuries past, than the great growth of its manufacturing towns, such as Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham, and others; which are still increasing in wealth, people, business, and buildings. Yet, Lord Moleworth † complained, in 1721, "that we are not one-third peopled, and our stock of men daily decreases through our wars, plantations, and sea-voyages." His lordship was arguing, when he made this observation, for a *general naturalization*, a policy of very doubtful merit; because, in all sudden change, there

\* Chron. Com. vol. ii. p. 314.

† Pref. to his translation of Hottoman's *Franco-Gallia*, 2d edit. p. 23—4.

is considerable inconvenience; and he may have, therefore, been biaſſed by his principle. If this nobleman intended to add his testimony to an apparent fact, that he ſaw no labourers to hire, his evidence would only prove, *that the induſtrious claſſes were fully employed*; and employment never fails to promote population. If his lordſhip only meant to give vent to his laudable anxieties for his country, this circumſtance would lead us to infer, that great as well as little minds are too apt to complain of the miſeries of the preſent.

When we *our betters* ſee bearing our woes,  
We ſcarcely think *our miſeries* our foes.

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## CHAP. VII.

*The State of the Nation, at the Accession of George II.—Remarks thereon.—The Increase of Trade, and Shipping.—Complaints of their Decline.—Reflections.—Our Strength, when War began in 1739.—Our Trade, and Shipping, during the War.—The Prosperity of both, at the Restoration of Peace.—Complaints of Decline.—Remarks.*

THE reign of George II. with whatever sinister events it opened, will be found to have promoted greatly, before its successful end, the industry, and productive capital of the nation; and, consequently, the efficient numbers of the people, by the means of augmented employments.

He found his kingdom burdened with a funded debt, of rather more than fifty millions; which required annually, from the land and labour of the nation, taxes to the amount of two millions, and upwards, to pay the creditor's annuity.

But, as his predecessor reduced, ten years before, the interest payable on the public debts, from six *per cent.* to five, the administration of the present King made a further reduction, with the consent of all parties, from five *per cent.* to four, in 1727. These measures, which the fortunate circumstances

of the times, rendered easy, and safe, not only strengthened public and private credit, but, by reducing the natural interest of money still more, must have thereby facilitated every operation of domestic manufactures, as well as every effort of foreign traffic. The fabrics of wool were, at the same time, freed from fraud. And the peace with Spain, in 1728, must have invigorated our exportations to the Mediterranean the more, as a truce was then also made with Morocco.

Yet, party-rage ran so high, in 1729, says Anderson\*, that the friends of the minister found themselves obliged to prove, by *facts*, what was before generally known to be true, that *Britain was then in a thriving condition*: the low interest of money, said they, demonstrates a greater plenty of cash than formerly; this abundance of money has raised the price of lands from twenty and twenty-one years purchase, to twenty and twenty-five; an advance, which proves that there were more persons able and ready to buy than formerly:—And the great sums, which were of late expended in the inclosing, and improving of lands,

\* Chron. Com. vol. ii. p. 322.—The cause of the above-mentioned *party-rage* is now sufficiently known. Sir Spencer Compton outwitted himself in the bargain for *place*, about Queen Caroline's jointure. Sir R. Walpole did not higgler with her Majesty about a hundred thousand pounds: and he was, in return, continued *the minister*. But, the prosperity of the people is no wise connected with the interested contests among *the great*.

and



and in opening mines, are proofs of an augmentation of opulence, and people ; while the increased value of our exports, shews an increase of manufactures ; at the same time that the greater number of shipping, which were cleared outwards, marks the wider extent of our navigation.

If we compare the averages of our vessels, and cargoes, in the first years of the present reign, with those of the three years of peace, which preceded the war of 1739, we shall see all those truths in a still more pleasing light.

Years.	Ships cleared Outwards.			Value of Cargoes.
	Tons Eng.	D <sup>o</sup> foreign.	Total.	£
1726 } 27 } 28 }	432,832 - 23,651 - 456,483			7,918,406
1736 } 37 } 38 }	476,941 - 26,627 - 503,568			9,993,232

It was at this moment of unexampled prosperity, that the elder Lord Lyttelton wrote *Considerations on the present State of Affairs*, (1738). "In most parts of England," says he, "gentlemen's rents are so ill paid, and the weight of taxes lies so heavy upon them, that those, who have nothing from the Court, can scarce support their families.—Such is the state of our manufactures, such is that of our colonies ; both should be enquired into, that the nation may know, whether the former can support themselves much longer under their various pressures." The editor of his lordship's works would have done no disservice

diservice to the memory of a worthy man, had he consigned this factious effusion to anonymous obscurity. Animated by a congenial spirit, Pope too wrote *Considerations on the State of Affairs*: in his two dialogues, entitled THIRTY-EIGHT, he represents, in most energetic language, and exquisite numbers, the nation *as totally ruined; as overwhelmed with corruption*:

“ See thronging millions to the Pagod run,  
And offer country, parent, wife, or son!  
Hear her bleak trumpet through the land proclaim,  
That not to be corrupted is the shame,”

It was about the same time also, that William Richardson composed his Essay “*On the Causes of the Decline of Foreign Trade.*” But, it is not easy to conceive, that any disquisition can be more depraved, than a treatise to explain *the causes of an effect*, which did *not exist*.

It was the evident purpose of some of those writers to drive the nation headlong into war, without thinking of any other consequences, than acquiring power, or gratifying spleen; and without caring how much a people, represented as unable to pay their rents, might be burthened with taxes; or a country, painted as feeble from dissipation, might be disgraced, or conquered.

If the nation had thus prospered in her affairs, and the people thus increased in their numbers, Great Britain must have contained, when she was

factiously forced into war with Spain, a greater number of fighting men than had ever fought her battles before. And she must have possessed a mass of productive capital, and a greatness of annual income, far superior to those of former years.

The course of circulation had filled, and even overflowed. The natural interest of money ran steadily at three *per cent*. The price of all the public securities had risen so much higher than they had been, in any other period, that the three *per cent*. stocks sold at a premium on 'Change\*. And the annual surpluses of the standing taxes, as they were paid into the sinking-fund, amounted, in 1738, to no less a sum than £. 1,231,127.

Of this fund, it has been very properly observed, that, while it contributes to the liquidation of former debts, it still more facilitates the contracting of new ones. But, the great contest among the public creditors, at that fortunate epoch, was not so much, who should be paid his capital, as who should be suffered to remain the creditors of the state †. How much of the public debts had been paid, during the last ten years, and how much still remained, as a burden on the state, will appear from the following detail :

\* Sir J. Barnard's speech for the reduction of interest.

† Id.

On the 31st Dec. 1728,		
the principal was	£. 51,028,431 ;—the interest	- £. 2,137,782
Ditto - 1738	46,661,767 ;—Ditto	- - - 1,962,053
	<hr/>	<hr/>
The intermediate diminu-		
tion - - - - -	£. 4,366,664	£. 175,729
	<hr/>	<hr/>

The value of the surplus produce of our land, and labour, which were then exported, amounted, yearly, to £. 9,993,232; and which might have been applied, when sent to foreign countries, as remittances, for carrying on the war at the greatest distance. It is indeed an acknowledged fact, that during no effluxion of time, was there ever such considerable balances paid to England, as there were transmitted, in the course of the war of 1739, on the general state of her payments.

The English shipping, which actually transported that vast cargo of £. 9,993,232, amounted, annually, to 476,941 tons; which were navigated probably by 26,616 men, who might have been all engaged, in the public service, either by influence, or force.





of the condition of our navigation, and commerce, during the war of 1739, by attending to the subjoined detail of our mercantile shipping, and cargoes :

Years	Ships cleared Outwards.			Value of Cargoes.
	Tons English.	Do foreign.	Total.	£.
1736	476,941	26,627	503,568	9,993,232
37				
38				
1739	384,191	87,260	471,451	8,870,499
40				
41				
1744	373,817	72,849	446,666	9,190,621
1747	394,571	101,671	496,242	9,775,340
1748	479,236	75,477	554,713	11,141,202

Thus the year 1744 marked the ultimate point of commercial depression, if we may judge, from the tonnage ; and 1740, if we draw our inference, from the value of exports : Yet, whether we argue from the one year, or from the other, we must conclude, that the interest of merchants was little injured, if it were not promoted, by this naval war.

But, we shall at once see how little our industrious classes had been oppressed by the war, at home, and with what elasticity the spring of foreign trade rebounded, on the removal of warfare, by comparing the averages of our navigation, and

commerce, during the peaceful years, before hostilities began, and after they ended :

Years.	Ships cleared Outwards.			Value of Cargoes. £.
	Tons English.	D <sup>o</sup> foreign.	Total.	
1736 } 37 } 38 }	476,941 - 26,627 - 503,568			9,993,232
1749 } 50 } 51 }	609,798 - 51,386 - 661,184			12,599,112

During the foregoing fifty years of uncommon prosperity, as to our agriculture \* and manufacture, our navigation, and traffic, and credit, the incumbrances of the public, and the burdens of the people, equally continued to increase. The debt, which was left at the demise of Queen Anne, remained undiminished, in its capital, at the demise of George I. though the annuity payable on it had been lessened almost a million. The ten

\* It appears, by an account laid before the Parliament, that there had been exported in *five* years, from 1744 to 1748, *corn*, from England, to the amount of 3,768,444 quarters : which, at a medium of prices, was worth to this nation, £. 8,007,948. Now, the average of the five years is 753,689 quarters, yearly, of the value of £. 1,601,589. The exportation of 1749, and 1750, rose still higher. "This is an immense sum," says the compiler of the Annual Register, [1772, p. 197] "to flow immediately from the produce of the earth, and the labour of the people; enriching our merchants, and increasing an invaluable breed of seamen." He might have added, with equal propriety, *enriching our yeomanry, and increasing the useful breed of labourers dependent on them.*

years of subsequent peace having made little alteration, the public debt amounted, on the 31st of December, 1738, to - - - - £.46,661,767

On the 31st of December, 1749,

to - - - - - \* 74,221,686

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—whence we perceive, by an easy calculation, that an additional debt had been mean while incurred, of £.27,559,919, besides unfunded debts to a considerable amount. But, the nine years war of 1739 cost this nation upwards of sixty-four millions, without gaining any object; because no valuable object can be gained by the generality of wars, which, as they often commence, without adequate cause, end usually without much deliberation. It is to be lamented, when hostilities cease, that the party, which forces the nation to begin them, without real provocation, is not compelled to pay the expence.

The current of wealth, which had flowed into the nation, during the obstructions of war, continued a still more rapid course, on the return of peace. The taxes produced abundantly, because an industrious people were able to consume liberally. And the surpluses of all the imposts, after paying the interest of debts, amounted to £.1,274,172 †. The coffers of the rich began to

\* History of Debts, and J. Postlethwayt's History of the Public Revenue.

† History of Debts from an Exchequer account.



overflow. Circulation became still more rapid. The interest of money, which had risen during the pressures of war to four *per cent.* fell to three, when the cessation of hostilities terminated the loans to government. The administration seized this prosperous moment to reduce, with the consent of the proprietors, the interest of almost fifty-eight million of debts, from four *per cent.* to three and a half, during seven years, from 1750, and afterwards to three *per cent.* for ever. And by these prudent measures, the annuity payable to the creditors of the state was lessened, in the years 1750 and 1751, from £. 2,966,000 to £. 2,663,000\*.

It was at this fortunate epoch, that Lord Bolingbroke wrote *Some Considerations on the State of the Nation*; in which he represents *the public as on the verge of bankruptcy, and the people as ready to fall into confusion, from their distress and danger.* Little did that illustrious party-man know, at least little was he willing to own, how much both the public, and the people, had advanced, from the time when he had been driven from power, in all that can make a nation prosperous, and great. Doddington, at the same time—"saw the country in so dangerous a condition, and found himself so incapable to give it relief†,"—that he resigned a lucrative office, from pure disinterestedness. And the second edition of Richardson's *Essay on the Causes of the Decline of Foreign Trade*, was oppor-

\* J. Postlethwayt's *History of the Revenue*, p. 238.

† Diary, March 1749—50, &c.

tunely published, with additional arguments, in 1750, to evince to the world the *causes* of an *effect*, that did *not exist*.

State and wealth, the business, and the crowd,  
Seem, at this distance, but a darker cloud :  
And are to him who rightly things esteems,  
No other in effect than what it seems.

Notwithstanding all that apparent prosperity, and augmentation of numbers, we ought to mention, as circumstances, which probably may have retarded the progress of population, the Spanish war of 1727, that was not, however, of long continuance. The settlement of Georgia, in 1733, carried off a few of the lowest orders, the idle, and the needy. The real hostilities, that began in 1739, were probably attended with much more baneful consequences. The rebellion of 1745 introduced a temporary disorder, though there were drawn from its confusions, measures the most salutary, in respect to industry, and population. "Let the country gentlemen," says Corbyn Morris, when speaking on the then mortality of London [March 1750-1] "be called forth, and declare—Have they not continually felt, for many years past, an increasing want of husbandmen and day-labourers? Have the farmers throughout the kingdom no just complaints of the *excessive increasing prices of workmen*, and of the impossibility of procuring a sufficient number at any price?"

Now, admitting the truth of these pregnant affirmations, they may be shewn to have been altogether

gether consistent with facts, and with principles. Allowing his *many years* to reach to the demise of George I. it may be asserted, because it has been proved, that our agriculture had been so much improved, as not only to supply domestic wants, but even to furnish other nations with the means of subsistence; and that every branch of our manufactures had kept pace with the flourishing state of our husbandry. It is surely demonstrable, that it required a greater number of artificers to manufacture commodities, of the value of £. 11,141.202, and to navigate 554,713 tons of shipping, in 1748, than to fabricate goods of the value of £ 7,951,772, and to navigate 456,483 tons of shipping, in 1728. But, great demand creates a scarcity of all things; which in the end procures an abundant supply. And, that *the excessive prices of workmen* did in fact produce a sufficient reinforcement of *workmen*, may be inferred from the numbers which, in no long period, were brought into action, by public and private encouragement.

We see in familiar life, that when money is expended upon works of uncommon magnitude, in any village, or parish, labourers are always collected, in proportion to the augmentation of employments. Experience shews, that the same increase of the industrious classes never fails to ensue in larger districts; in a town, a county, or a kingdom, when proportional sums are expended for labour. And it is, in this manner, that manufactures and trade, every where, augment the numbers  
of

of mankind, by the active expenditure of productive capitals. He, then, who labours to evince, that the lower orders of men decrease, in numbers, while agriculture, the arts (both useful and ornamental) with commerce, are advancing from inconsiderable beginnings, to unexampled greatness, is only diligent to prove, That *causes do not produce their effects* :

As women, who yet apprehend  
Some sudden *cause* of *causeless* fear,  
Although that seeming cause take end,  
A shaking through their limbs still find.

To those reasons of prosperity, that, having for years existed, had thus produced the most beneficial effects, prior to the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, new encouragements were immediately added. The reduction of the interest of the national debts, by measures altogether consistent with justice, and public faith, shewed not only the flourishing condition of the kingdom, but also tended to make it flourish still more. And there necessarily followed all those salutary consequences, in respect to domestic diligence, and foreign commerce, which, Sir Josiah Child had insisted a century before, would result from *the lowness of interest*.

An additional incitement was, at the same time, given to the whale-fishery, partly by the naturalization of skilful foreigners, but more by pecuniary bounties. The establishment of the corporation of *The Free British Fishery*, in 1750, must have promoted



moted population, by giving employment to the industrious classes, however unprofitable the project may have been to the undertakers, whose success was, unhappily, so unequal to their good intentions, and unrecompensed expences. The voluntary society, which was entered into, in 1754, *for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures, and Commerce*, must have been attended with still more beneficial effects, by animating the spirit of experiment, and perseverance. And the laws, which were successively enacted, and measures pursued, from 1732 to 1760, *for preventing the excessive use of spirituous liquors*, must have promoted populousness, by preserving the health, and inciting the diligence, of the lower orders of the people.

Yet, these statutes, salutary as they must have been, did not promote the health, and numbers of the people, in a more eminent degree, than the laws, which were passed, during the same period, for making more easy communications, by the improvement of roads. We may judge of the necessity of these acts of legislation from the penalties annexed to them. Of the foundering condition of the roads of England, while they were amended by the compulsive labour of the poor, we may judge, indeed, from the wretched state of the ways which, in the present times, are kept in repair by the ancient mode. Turnpikes, which we saw first introduced, soon after the Restoration, were erected slowly, in opposition to the prejudices of the people. The act, which for a time made it felony, at the  
beginning

beginning of the reign of George II. to pull down a toll-gate, was continued as a perpetual law, before the conclusion of it. Yet, the great roads of England remained almost in their ancient condition, even as late as 1752, and 1754, when the traveller seldom saw a turnpike for two hundred miles, after leaving the vicinity of London\*. And we now know, from experience, how much the making of highways and bridges advances the population of any country, by extending correspondence, by facilitating communications, and, consequently, by promoting internal traffic, which was thereby rendered greater than our foreign; since *the best customers of Britain are the people of Britain.*

\* See the Gentleman's Magazine, 1752—54.

## CHAP. VIII.

*A captious Peace produced a new War.—The Resources of Britain.—Trade prospers amidst Hostilities.—Its Amount at the Peace of 1763.—Remarks.*

AFTER a captious peace of very short duration, the flames of war, which, for several years, had burnt unseen among the American woods, broke out at length, in 1755. Unfortunate, as these hostilities were, at the beginning, they yet proved successful, in the end, owing to causes, which it is the province of history to explain.

However fashionable it then was for discontented statesmen to talk \*, of the *consuming condition of the country*, it might have been inferred beforehand, that we had prodigious resources, if the ruling powers had been animated by any genius. The defeats, which plainly followed from misconduct, naturally brought talents of every kind into action. And the events of the war of 1756 convinced the world, notwithstanding every *estimate* of the *manners*, and *principles*, of *the times*, that the strength of Great Britain is irresistible, when it is

\* See Doddington's Diary, 1755—6—7.

conducted with secrecy, and dispatch, with wisdom, and energy.

When Brackenridge was upbraided by Foster, for making public degrading accounts of our population, at the commencement of the war of 1755, he asked, justly enough, "*What encouragement can it give to the enemy to know, that we have two millions of fighting men in our British islands?*" But, we had, assuredly, in our British islands, a million more than Brackenridge unwillingly allowed.

The numbers, and spirit, of our people were amply supported by the augmented resources of the nation. The *natural* interest of money, which had been 3 *per cent.* at the beginning of this reign, never rose higher than £. 3. 13s. 6d. at the conclusion of it, after an expensive course of eight years hostilities. During the two first years of the war, the ministers borrowed money at 3 *per cent.* But, five millions being lent to the administration, in 1757, the lenders required 4½ *per cent.* And from the former punctuality of government, and present ease, with which taxes were found to pay the stipulated interest, Great Britain commanded the money of Europe, when the pressures of war obliged France to stop the payment of interest on some of her funded debts.

Meantime, the surpluses of the standing taxes of Great Britain amounted, at the commencement of the war, to one million three hundred thousand pounds, which, after the reduction of the interest of debts, in 1757, swelled to one million six hundred



dred thousand pounds. And, from this vast current of income, the more scanty streams, which slowly flowed from new imposts, were continually supplied, during the exigencies of war.

It is the expences, more than the slaughter, of modern hostilities, which debilitate every community. The whole supplies granted by Parliament, and raised upon the people, during the reign of George II. amounted \* to £. 183,976,624.

The supplies granted, during the five years of the war, before the decease of that prince, amounted to - - - - - £. 54,319,325  
The supplies voted, during the three first years of his successor, amounted † to - - - - - 51,437,314

The principal expences of a war, which, having been undertaken to drive the French from North America, has proved unfortunate in the issue - - - - - £. 105,756,639

Yet, none of the taxes, that had been established, in order to raise those vast sums, bore heavy on the industrious classes, if we except the additional excise of three shillings a barrel on beer ‡. And, whatever

\* Camp. Pol. Sur. vol. ii. p. 551.

† Id.

‡ That the consumption of the great body of the people, was not lessened, in consequence of the war, we may certainly infer

whatever burdens may have been imposed, internal industry pursued its occupations, and the enterprise of our traders sent to every quarter of the globe, merchandizes to an extent, which were beyond all former example.

There were exported, annually, during the first years of the war, surpluses of our land and labour, to the amount of £. 11,708,515 \* ; which, being sent abroad, from time to time, to different markets, as demand required, might have been all applied, (as some of them undoubtedly were) in paying the

infer from the official details, in the Appendix to the Observations on the State of the Nation :

The average of eight years net produce of the

duty on soap, &c. ending with 1754	- - -	£. 228,114
Ditto, - - - ending with 1767	- - -	264,902
		<hr/>
Ditto on candles, - ending with 1754	- - -	£. 136,073
Ditto on ditto, - - ending with 1767	- - -	155,716
		<hr/>
Ditto on hides, - ending with 1754	- - -	£. 168,200
Ditto on ditto, - ending with 1767	- - -	189,216
		<hr/>

As no new duties had been laid on the before-mentioned necessities of life, the augmentation of the revenue evinces an increase of consumption; consequently of comforts; and consequently of people. In confirmation, let it be considered too, that the *hereditary* and *temporary excise* produced, according to an eight-years average, ending with 1754 - £. 525,317  
Ditto, - - - - - ending with 1767 - 538,542

\* There were, moreover, exported from Scotland, according to an average of 1755—6—7, goods to the value of £. 663,401.

fleets and armies, that made conquests, in every quarter of the globe.

The English shipping, which, after exporting that vast cargo, might have been employed by government, as transports, and certainly furnished the fleet with a hardy race, amounted to 609,798 tons; which must have been navi-

gated, if we allow twelve men to

every 200 tons burden, by - - 36,588 men.

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We may determine, with regard to the progress, and magnitude of the royal navy, from the following statement :

	Tonnage.	Sailors voted by Parliament.	Their Wages, &c.
In 1749 -	228,215	- 17,000	- £. 839,800
1754 -	226,246	- 10,000	- 494,000
1760 -	300,416	- 70,000	- 3,458,000

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It is the boast of Britain, "that while other countries suffered innumerable calamities, during that long period of hostilities, this happy island escaped them all; and cultivated, unmolested, her manufactures, her fisheries, and her commerce, to an amount, which has been the wonder, and envy, of the world," This flattering picture of Doctor Campbell, will, however, appear to be extremely like the original, from an examination of the subsequent details; which are more accurate, in their notices, and still more just, in their conclusions. Compare, then, the following averages of our navigation,

vigation, and traffic, during the subjoined years, both of peace, and of war :

Years.	Sh'ps cleared Outwards.			Value of Cargoes. £.
	Tons English.	D <sup>o</sup> foreign.	Total.	
1749 } 50 } 51 }	609,798	- 51,386	- 661,184	12,599,112
1755 } 56 } 57 }	451,254	- 73,456	- 524,711	11,708,515
1760	471,241	- 112,737	- 573,978	14,693,270
61	508,220	- 117,835	- 626,055	14,873,194
62	480,444	- 120,126	- 600,570	13,546,171

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Thus, the year 1756 marked the lowest point of the depression of commerce; whence it gradually rose, till it had gained a superiority over the unexampled traffic of the tranquil years 1749-50-51, if we may judge from the value of exports; and almost to an equality, if we draw our inferences from the tonnage of shipping. The Spanish war of 1762, imposed an additional weight, and we have seen the consequent decline.

When, by the treaty of Paris, entire freedom was again restored to foreign commerce, the traders once more sent out adventures of a still greater amount to every quarter of the world, though the nation was supposed to be strained, by too great an exertion of her powers. The salutary effects of more extensive manufactures, and a larger trade, were instantly seen in the commercial superiority



of the three years, following the pacification of 1763, over those, ensuing the peace of 1748, though these have been celebrated justly, as times of uncommon prosperity. We shall be fully convinced of this satisfactory truth, if we examine the following proofs:

Years.	Ships cleared Outwards.			Value of Cargoes.
	Tons English.	Do foreign.	Total.	£.
1749 } 50 } 51 }	609,798 - 51,386 - 661,184			12,599,112
1758	389,842	116,002	505,844	12,618,335
1759	406,335	121,016	527,351	13,947,788
1764 } 65 } 66 }	639,872 - 68,136 - 708,008			14,925,950

The gross income of the Post-office, foreign and domestic, *which*, it is said, *can alone demonstrate the extent of our correspondence*, amounted,

In 1754, to	- - -	£. 210,663
In 1764, to	- - -	281,535*.

In the midst of that unexampled prosperity, and accumulation of private wealth, Hume talked, in his history, of the *pernicious practice of borrowing on parliamentary security*; a practice, says he, the more likely to become *pernicious the more a nation advances in opulence*, and credit, and now threatens the

\* The account of the Post-office revenue is stated, by the Annual Register 1773, much higher, mistakenly.

*very existence of the nation.* Even the grave Blackstone, who seems to have been infected, by the declamations of the times, wrote of its being indisputably certain, in 1765, that the present magnitude of our national incumbrances, very far exceeds all calculations of commercial benefits, and is productive of the greatest inconveniencies, by the enormous taxes, that are raised upon the necessaries of life, for the payment of the interest of the debt ; and those taxes weaken the internal strength of a state, by anticipating those resources, which should be reserved to defend it, in case of necessity\*. Such sentiments, from such men, proceed partly from a narrow view of the subject, and, perhaps, more from well-meaning desires to do national good, by raising public apprehensions, with regard to the security of property, and the safety of the state.

To laugh, were want of goodness, and of grace ;  
And to be grave, exceeds all power of face.

\* Commentaries, vol. i. p. 328, 4th edit.

## CHAP. IX.

*The Commercial Failures, in 1763.—Opinions thereon.—The true State of the Nation.—Observations on the Peace of 1763.—Various Laws for promoting domestic Improvements.—Satisfactory Proofs of our Commercial Prosperity, at the Epoch of the Colonial Revolt.—Yet were our Trade and Shipping popularly represented as much on the Decline.*

**I**T was, at that fortunate epoch, that Great Britain, having carried conquest over the hostile powers of the earth, by her arms, saved Europe from bankruptcy by the superiority of her opulence, and by the disinterestedness of her spirit. The failures, which happened at Berlin, at Hamburgh, and in Holland, during July 1763, communicated dismay, and distrust, to every commercial town, on the European continent\*. Wealth, it is said, no longer procured credit, nor connexion any more gained confidence: The merchants of Europe remained, for some time, in consternation, because every trader feared for himself, amidst the

\* See the despondent letter from the Bankers of Hamburgh to the bankers of Amsterdam, dated the 4th of August 1763, in the Gentleman's Magazine of this year, p. 422.

ruins of the greatest houses. It was at this crisis, that the British traders shewed the greatness of their capitals, the extent of their credit, and their disregard of either loss, or gain, while the mercantile world seemed to pass away as a winter's cloud; They trusted correspondents, whose situations were extremely unstable, to a greater amount than they had ever ventured to do, in the most prosperous times: And they made vast remittances to those commercial cities, where the deepest distress was supposed to prevail, from the determination of the wealthiest bankers to suspend the payment of their own acceptances. At this crisis, the Bank of England discounted bills of exchange, to a great amount, while every bill was suspected, as being of doubtful responsibility. And the British government, with a wise policy, actuated, and supported all\*.

On that proud day was published, however, "*An Alarm to the Stockholders.*" By another writer, the nation was remembered of "*the decrease of the current coin, as a most dangerous circumstance.*" And by an author, still more considerable than either, we were instructed—"How the abilities of the country were stretched to their utmost extent, and beyond their natural tone, whilst trade

\* See Considerations on the Trade and Finances of the Kingdom. Yet, there were only, in England, 233 bankruptcies, during 1763, and 301, during 1764. Of bankruptcies, there were, in England, during 1773—562, and during 1793—1304.—Thus, it is by comparison, that we gain accurate knowledge.



suffered in proportion: For, the price, both of labour and materials, was enhanced by the number, and weight, of the new taxes, and by the extraordinary demand, which the ruin of the French navigation brought on Great Britain; whereby rival nations may be now enabled to under-sell us at foreign markets, and rival us in our own: That both public and private credit were, at the same time, oppressed by the rapid increase of the national debt, by the scarcity of money, and the high rate of interest, which aggravated every evil, and affected every money transaction."—Such is the melancholic picture, which was exhibited of our commercial situation, soon after the peace of 1763, by the hand of a master\*, who probably meant to sketch a caricature, rather than to draw a portrait.

If, however, the *resources* of Britain arise chiefly from the *labour* of Britain, it may be easily shewn, that there never existed, in this island, so many *industrious people*, as after the return of peace, in 1763. It is not easy, indeed, to calculate the numbers, who die in the camp, or in battle, more than would otherwise perish from want, or from vice, in the city, or hamlet. It is some consolation, that the laborious classes are too wealthy to covet the pittance of the soldier, or too independent to court the dangers of the sailor. And though the forsaken lover, or the restless vagrant, may look for

\* Considerations on the Trade, and Finances, of the Kingdom, p. 3.

refuge in the army, or the fleet, it may admit of some doubt, how far the giving of proper employment to both, may not have freed their parishes from disquietude, and from crimes. There is, therefore, no room to suppose, that any one left the anvil, or the loom, to follow *the idle trade of war*, during the hostilities of 1756, or that there were less private income, and public circulation, after the re-establishment of peace, than at any prior epoch. For it must, undoubtedly, have required a greater number of artificers to produce merchandizes, for foreign exportation, after feeding and cloathing the in-

habitants, to the value

of - - - - - £. 14,694,970 - in 1760,  
than it did to fabricate

the value of - - - 12,599,112 - in 1750.

It must have demanded

a still greater number

of hands to work up

goods for exportation

of the value of - - 16,512,404 - in 1764,

than it did to manufac-

ture the value of - - 14,873,191 - in 1761.

A greater

A greater number of sea-		
men must surely have		
been employed to na-		Tons of <i>National</i>
vigate and repair - - -		Shipping.
than - - - - -	-	471,241 - in 1760,
And a still greater num-		451,254 - in 1756.
ber to man and repair -	-	
than - - - - -	-	651,402 - in 1765,
	-	609,798* - in 1750.
		<hr/>
		Yet,

\* It is acknowledged, that Scotland furnished a greater number of recruits, for the fleets and armies of Britain, during the war of 1756, than England, considering the smaller number of her fighting men. Yet, by this drain, the industrious classes seem not to have been in the least diminished. For of linen there were made for sale,

in 1758 - - - - -	10,624,435 yards.
in 1760 - - - - -	11,747,728

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Of the augmentation of the whole products of Scotland, during the war, we may judge from the following detail: The value of the merchandizes exported from Scotland,

in 1756 - - - - -	£. 663,401
60 - - - - -	1,086,205
64 - - - - -	1,243,927

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There were exported yearly, of *British-manufactured* linens, according to an average of seven years of peace, from 1749 to 1755 - - - - - 576,373 yards.

Ditto, according to an average of seven years of subsequent war, from 1756 to 1762 - 1,355,226

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Having thus discovered, that the sword had not been put into *useful* hands, let us take a view of the great woollen manufactories

Yet, it must be confessed, that however *the people* individually may have been employed, *the state* corporately was embarrassed, in no small degree, by the debts which had been contracted by a war, glorious, but unprofitable. Upwards of fifty-eight millions had been added to our funded debts, before we began to negotiate for peace, in 1762. When the unfunded debts were afterwards brought to account, and assigned an annual interest, from a specific fund, the whole debt, which was incurred by the hostilities of 1756, swelled to £.72,111,000. And when every claim on the public, for the war's expences, was honestly satisfied, the national debt amounted to - £.146,682,844,

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which yielded the creditors, to whom it was due, an annuity of - - - - - £.4,850,821.

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Though it is the interest, and not the capital\*, that constitutes the real debt of *the state*, yet this annuity

factories of England, with an aspect to the same exhilarating subject. The value of *woollen goods* exported,

in 1755	- - -	£. 3,575,297
57	- - -	4,758,095
58	- - -	4,673,462
59	- - -	5,352,299
60	- - -	5,453,172

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\* Writers have been carried of late, by their zeal of patriotism, to demand the payment of the principal of the debt, though



annuity was, doubtless, a heavy incumbrance on the land and labour of this island: And, however burdensome, it was not the only weight that obstructed, in whatever degree, the industrious classes, in adding accumulation to accumulation. The charge of the civil government was then calculated, as an expence to the people, at a million. And the peace establishment, for the army, navy, and mis-

though the interest be punctually paid; as if the nature of the contract, between *the individual* and the *state*, had stipulated for the payment of both. The fact is, that few lenders, since King William's days, have expected re-payment of *the capitals*, which they lent to the government. *The stocks*, as the public securities of the British nation are called, may be compared to the money transactions of the Bank of Amsterdam, as they have been explained by Sir James Steuart. No man who lodges *treasure*, in this Bank, ever expects to see it again: But, he may *transfer the Bank receipt* for it. The Directors of this Bank discovered from experience, that if the number of *sellers* of those receipts should, at any time, be greater than the *buyers* of them, the value of *actual treasure safely lodged* would depreciate. And it is supposed, that these prudent managers employ brokers to buy up the Bank receipts, when they begin to fall in their value, from the superabundance of them on 'Change. Apply this rational explanation to the British funds. No creditor of a *funded debt* can ask payment of the principal at the Treasury; but, he may dispose of his stock in *the Alley*. The principles, which regulate demand and supply, are equally applicable to the British funds, as to *the treasure* in the Amsterdam Bank. If there be more sellers than buyers, the price of stocks will fall: If there be more buyers than sellers they will as naturally rise. And the time is now come, when the British government ought to employ every pound, which can possibly be saved, in buying up the *principal* of such public debts as pay the greatest interest.

cellaneous

cellaneous services of less amount, though of as much use, was then stated at three millions and a half, without entering into the controversy of that changeful day, whether it was a few pounds more, or a few pounds less. If it astonished Europe to see Great Britain borrow, in *one year twelve millions*, and to find taxes to pay the interest of such a loan, amidst hostilities of unbounded expence, it might have given the European world still higher ideas of the resources of Britain, to see her satisfy every claim, and re-establish her financial affairs, in no long period, after the conclusion of war.

But, the acquisitions of peace proved, unhappily, more embarrassing to the collective mass of an industrious nation, than the imposts, which were constantly collected, for paying the interest of debts, and the charges of government. The treaty of 1763 retained Canada, Louisiana, and Florida, on the American continent; the Grenades, Tobago, St. Vincent, and Dominica, in the West Indies; and Senegal in Africa. Without regarding other objects, here was a wide field opened for the attention of interest, and for the operations of avarice. Every man, who had credit with the ministers at home, or influence over the governors in the colonies, ran for the prize of American territory. And many land-owners in Great Britain, of no small importance, neglected the possessions of their fathers, for a portion of wilderness beyond the Atlantic. This was the spirit, which formerly debilitated Spain, more than  
the

the Peruvian mines ; because the Spaniards turned their affections from their country to the Indies. With a similar spirit, millions of productive capital were withdrawn from the agriculture, and manufactures, and trade of Great Britain, to cultivate the ceded islands, in the other hemisphere. Domestic occupations were obstructed, consequently, and circulation was stopped, in proportion to the stocks withdrawn, to the industry enfeebled, and to the ardour turned to less salutary objects.

While the industrious classes of the people were thus individually injured in their affairs, the state suffered equally in its finances. The new acquisitions required the charge of civil governments, which was provided for, in the annual supplies, and from taxes on the land, and labour, of this island. To defend those acquisitions, larger, and more expensive military establishments became now necessary, though our conquests did not yield a penny in return\*. And an additional drain being thus opened, for the circulating money, the opulent men, who generally lend to government, enhanced the price of a commodity, which was thus rendered more valuable, by the incessant demands of adventurers, who offered the usurious interest of the Indies†. The coins did not, consequently, overflow the coffers of the rich ;

\* There were some small sums brought into the annual supplies from the sale of lands in the ceded islands.

† It was a wise policy, therefore, to encourage foreigners to lend money on the security of West-India estates,

the price of the public funds did not rise, as at the former peace, when no such drain existed; and the government was unable to make bargains for the public, in 1764, equally advantageous, as at the less splendid epoch of 1750.

In these views of an interesting subject, the true objection to the peace of 1763 was not, that we had *retained too little*, but that we had *retained too much*. Had the French been altogether excluded from the fisheries of Labrador, and Newfoundland, and wholly restored to every conquest, the peace had been, perhaps, more complete. Whether the ministers could have justified such a treaty, within the walls of Parliament, or without, is a consideration personal to them, and is an object, quite distinct in argument. Unhappy! that a British minister, to defend himself from clamour, must generally act against the genuine interest of his country.

Fortunate it is, however, for Britain, that there is a spirit in her industry, an increase in the accumulations of her industrious classes, and a prudence in the œconomy of her individual citizens, which have raised her to greatness, and sustained her power, notwithstanding the waste of wars, the blunders of treaties, and the tumults in peace. The people prospered at the commencement of the present reign. They prospered still more, when our colonies revolted. And this most energetic nation continues, with augmented powers, to prosper still, notwithstanding every obstruction.

If



If this marvellous prosperity arise from the consciousness of every one, that *his person is free*, and *his property safe*, owing to the steady operation of laws, and to the impartial administration of justice, one of the first acts of the present reign must be allowed to have given additional force to that salutary principle. A young Monarch, with an attachment to freedom, which merits the commendations that posterity will not withhold, recommended from the throne to make the judges commissions less changeful, and their salaries more beneficial. The Parliament seconded the zeal of their Sovereign, in giving efficacy to a measure, which had an immediate tendency to secure every right of individuals, and to give ardour to all their pursuits. If we continue a brief review of the laws of the present reign, we shall probably find, that, whatever may have been neglected, much has been done, for promoting the prosperity, and populousness, of this island.

Agriculture ought to be the great object of our care, because it is the broad foundation of every other establishment. Yet, owing in some measure to the scarcity of seasons, but much to the clamour of the populace, we departed, at the end of the late reign, from the system which, being formed at the Revolution, is said to have then given verdure to our fields. During every session, from the demise of George II. a law was passed for allowing the importation of salt provisions from Ireland; for discontinuing the duties on tallow, but-  
ter,

ter, hogs-lard, and greafe, from Ireland; till, in the progress of our liberality, we made those regulations perpetual, which were before only temporary. We prohibited the export of grain, while we admitted the importation of it; till, in 1773, we settled by a compromise, between the growers, and consumers, a standard of prices, at which both should, in future, be free\*. If, by the foregoing measures, the markets were better supplied, the industrious classes must have been more abundantly fed: if prices were forced too low, the farmers, and with them husbandry, must have both equally suffered. A steady market is for the interest of all parties; and ought, therefore, to be the aim of the legislature. On this principle, the Parliament seems to have acted, when, by repealing the laws against engrossers, it endeavoured, in 1772, to *give a free circulation to the trade in corn*. On the other hand, various laws were passed †, for preserving timber, and underwood; for encouraging the culture of shrubs and trees, of roots and plants. And additional laws were passed for securing the property of the husbandman, in the produce of his fields; and, consequently, for giving force to his diligence.

The dividing of commons, the inclosing of wastes, the draining of marshes, are all connected with agriculture. Not one law, for any of these

\* 10 Geo. III. ch. 39; 13 Geo. III. ch. 43.

† 6 Geo. III. ch. 36—48; 9 Geo. III. ch. 41.

valuable ends, was passed, in the warlike reign of King William. During the hostilities of Queen Anne, eight such laws, indeed, were enacted. In the reign of George I. seventeen laws were enacted for the same salutary purposes. In the three-and-thirty years of George II.'s reign, there were passed a hundred and eighty-two laws, with the same wise design. But, during the first fourteen sessions of the present reign, no fewer than seven hundred and two acts were obtained, for dividing of commons, inclosing of wastes, and draining of marshes. In this manner, was more useful territory added to the empire, at the expence of individuals, than had been gained, by every war, since the Revolution. In acquiring distant dominions, through conquest, the state is enfeebled, by the charge of their establishments, in peace, and by the still more enormous debts, incurred in war, for their defence. In gaining additional lands, by reclaiming the wild, improving the barren, and appropriating the common, you, at once, extend the limits of our island, and make its soil more productive. Yet, a certain class of writers have been studious to prove, that, by making the common fields more fruitful, the legislature has impoverished the poor\*. Connected with agriculture too is the making of roads. The highways of Britain were not equal

\* On the contrary, the Rev. Mr. Howlet, who cannot be too much praised for his researches, on the subject of population, has published a pamphlet, which proves satisfactorily, that *inclosures* promote the increase of the people.

in goodness to those of foreign countries, when the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle was concluded. From this epoch to the demise of George II. great exertions were certainly used, to supply the inconvenient defect. The first fourteen sessions of the present reign are distinguished, not only for collecting the various road-laws into one act, but for enacting no fewer than four hundred and fifty-two acts, for repairing the highways of different districts. If, by this employment of many hands, nothing was added to the extent of our country, every field, and every village, within it, were brought, by a more easy conveyance, nearer to each other.

In the same manner, canals facilitate agriculture, and promote manufactures, by offering a mode of carriage, at once cheaper, and more certain. A very early attention had been paid to the navigation of our rivers: from *the Revolution* to the demise of George II. many streams had been made navigable. But, a still greater number have been rendered more commodious to commerce, in the present reign, exclusive of the yet more valuable improvement of canals. And, during the first fourteen sessions of this reign, nineteen acts were passed, for making artificial navigations, including those stupendous works, the Bridgewater, the Trent, and the Forth, canals; which, by joining the Eastern and Western seas, and by connecting almost every manufacturing town with the capital, emulate the Roman labours.



In this period too, many of our harbours were enlarged, secured, and improved: many of our cities, including the metropolis of our empire, and our trade, were paved, cleansed, and lighted. And, without including the bridges, that have been built, and public edifices erected, the foregoing efforts, for domestic improvement, can, with no truth, or propriety, be deemed the works of an inactive age, or of a frivolous people.

If from agriculture, we turn our attention to manufactures, we shall find many laws enacted, for their encouragement, some with greater efficacy, and some with less. It was a wise policy to procure the *materials* of our manufactures at the cheapest rate. A tax was laid on foreign linens, in order to provide a fund, for raising hemp and flax at home; while bounties were given on these necessary articles from our colonies, the bounty on the exportation of hemp was withdrawn. The imposts on foreign linen yarn were withdrawn. Bounties were given on British linen cloth exported; while the making of cambricks was promoted, partly by prohibiting the foreign, and partly by giving fresh incentives, though without success, to the manufacture of cambricks, within our island. Indigo, cochineal, and log-wood, the necessities of dyers, were allowed to be freely imported. And the duty on oak-bark imported was lowered, in order to accommodate the tanners. It is to be lamented, that the state of the public debts does not admit the abolition of every tax on materials

of manufacture, of whatever country : this would be a measure so much wiser, than giving prohibitions against foreign manufactures, which never fail to bring with them the mischiefs of monopoly ; a worse commodity, at a higher price :

Such moderation with thy *bounty* join,  
That thou may'st nothing give that is not thine.

The importation of silks and velvets of foreign countries was, however, prohibited, while the wages and combinations of silk-weavers were restrained, though the price of the goods was not regulated, in favour of the consumers. The workers in leather were equally favoured, by similar means. The plate-glass manufacture was encouraged, by erecting a corporation, for carrying it on with greater energy. The making of utensils from gold and silver was favoured, by appointing wardens to detect every fraud. And the law, which had been made, during the penury of King William's days, for preventing innkeepers from using any other plate than silver spoons, was repealed in 1769, when we had made a very extensive progress in the acquisition of wealth, and in the taste for enjoying it :

———Egypt with Assyria strove  
In wealth and *luxury*.———

The most ancient staple of this island was, by prudent regulations in the fabrics of wool, sent to foreign markets, better in quality, and at a lower price.

General industry was excited by various means, which probably had their effect. Apprentices, and workers for hire, were placed under the jurisdiction of magistrates, who were empowered to enforce, by correction, the performance of contracts. Sobriety was, at the same time, preserved, by restraining the retail of spirituous liquors. But, above all, that law must have been attended with the most powerful effect, which was made "for the more effectual preventing of abuses, by persons employed in the manufacture of hats, woollen, linen, fustian, cotton, iron, leather, fur, hemp, flax, mohair, and silk; for restraining unlawful combinations of every one working in such manufactures; and for the better payment of their wages." This law must be allowed to contain the most powerful incitements of the human heart; when we consider too, that the assize of bread was at the same time regulated.

If from a review of manufactures, we inspect our shipping, we shall perceive regulations equally useful. The whale-fisheries of the river St. Lawrence, and Greenland, were encouraged by bounties, together with the white-herring fishery along the coasts of our island. Foreigners were excluded, by additional penalties, from holding shares in British ships. And oak-timber was preserved, by new laws, for the use of the royal navy. The voyages of discovery, which do so much honour to the present reign, though they did not proceed, from any act of the legislature, may be regarded

as

as highly beneficial to navigation, whether we consider the improvement of nautical science, or the preservation of the mariner's health.

But, all those encouragements had been given, in vain, had not the course of circulation been kept full, and current, and the coin timefully reformed. New modes were prescribed by Parliament, for the recovery of small debts in particular districts. Additional remedies were administered, for recovering payment on bills, and other mercantile securities, in Scotland. And the issuing of the notes of bankers was rendered more commodious and safe. The importation of the light silver coin, of this realm, was prohibited; and what was of more importance, every tender of British silver coin, in the payment of any sum more than five-and-twenty pounds, otherwise than by weight, at five shillings and twopence per ounce, was declared unlawful. This admirable principle, so just in its theory, and so wise in its practice, was, about the same time, applied to the gold coin. And the gold coins were re-called, and re-coined to an unexpected amount, and ordered to pass current by weight, according to the ancient course, rather than by tale, in conformity to modern practice. This measure, which does equal honour to the contriver, to the adviser, and to the executor, has been attended with all the salutary effects, that were foretold, as to our domestic circulation, our foreign trade, and to our *money-exchanges* with the commercial world.



The laws, which were thus passed, from the accession of his present Majesty, to the æra of the colonial revolt, had produced the most beneficial effects on our agriculture, and manufactures, on our commerce and navigation, had not the energetic spirit, that actuated our affairs, at the peace of 1763, continued to animate the industrious classes, and to accumulate their daily acquisitions. If any one chooses to appeal, from general reasonings, to particular facts, let him examine the following proofs :

Years.	Ships cleared Outwards.			Value of Cargoes.
	Tons Eng.	D <sup>o</sup> foreign.	Total.	£.
1764 } 65 } 66 }	639,872 - 68,136 - 708,008			14,925,950
1772 } 73 } 74 }	795,943 - 64,232 - 860,175			15,613,003

Thus, our navigation had gained, in the intervening period, more than a hundred and fifty thousand tons a year, and our foreign traffic had risen almost a million in annual worth. The gross revenue of the post-office, which, arising from a greater, or a less, correspondence, forms, according to Anderson, a *politico-commercial index*, amounted,

in 1764	-	to	-	£. 281,535
in 1774*	-	to	-	345,321

\* But, the franking of letters had been now regulated, and other improvements had been meantime made.

Yet,

Yet, prosperous as our affairs had been, during the short existence of the peace of 1763, they were represented, by an analogous spirit to that of 1738, either of designing faction, or of uninformed folly, as in an *alarming situation*. The state of things, it was said, is approaching to an awful crisis. The *navigation*, and *commerce*, by which we rose to power, and opulence, *are much on the decline*. Our taxes are numerous, and heavy, and provisions are dear. An enormous national debt threatens the ruin of public credit. Luxury has spread its baneful influence among all ranks of people; yet, luxury is necessary to raise a revenue, to supply the exigencies of the state. Our labouring poor are forced, by hard necessity, to seek that comfortable subsistence, in distant climes, which their industry at home cannot procure them. And the mother-country holds the rod over her children, the colonies, and, by her threatening aspect, is likely to drive them to desperate measures\*:

Th' *alarm-bell* rings from our Alhambra walls,  
And, from the streets, found drums and ataballs!

\* See Gent. Mag. 1774, p. 313, &c.

## CHAP. X.

*The Colonial Revolt.—The State of the Nation.—Her Finances, Trade, and Shipping.—Her military Power.—The Losses of Trade from the War.—The Revival of Trade on the Re-establishment of Peace.—Remarks thereon.—Financial Operations.—The Sinking Fund established.—Its salutary Policy.*

WHEN, owing to the native habits, and acquired confidence of her colonies; to the ancient neglects, and continued indulgence, of Britain; to the incitements of party-men, and to the imbecility of rulers; the nation found herself, at length, obliged to enter into a serious contest with her trans-atlantic provinces, she happily enjoyed all the advantages of a busy manufacture, of a vigorous commerce, of a most extensive navigation, and of a productive revenue. Of these animating truths, we shall receive sufficient conviction, by examining the following particulars:

After liquidating every claim, subsequent to the peace of 1763, and funding every debt, by assigning an half-yearly interest, for every principal, the public enjoyed an annual surplus, from the public imposts, of two millions two hundred thousand pounds,

pounds, in 1764. From 1765 to 1770, this sinking fund accumulated to £2,266,246. And from 1770 to 1775, the surpluses of all our taxes amounted annually to the vast sum of £2,651,455; which having risen, in 1775, and 1776, to three millions and upwards, proved a never-failing resource, amid the financial embarrassments of the ensuing war. These facts alone furnish the most satisfactory evidence of the great consumption of the collective mass of the people, and of their ability to consume, from their active labours, and accumulating opulence.

Yet, during the prosperous period of the peace, there were only discharged of the capital of the national debt - - - - - £.10,739,793.

And there remained, notwithstanding every diminution, when the war of the colonies began, in 1775, a national debt of - - - £.135,943,051;

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Whereon was paid to the public creditors an annuity of - - - £.4,440,821\*.

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The price of the stock of the Bank of England rose meanwhile from 113 *per cent.* in July 1764, to 143 *per cent.* in July 1774; and discounts on the bills of the navy fell from  $6\frac{1}{2}$  *per cent.* at the first epoch, to  $1\frac{1}{8}$  at the second. The reform of the coin turned the nominal exchanges on the side of Britain, which were, in fact, favourable before

\* Dr. Price, and Sir J. Sinclair.



hostilities began, owing to the flourishing state of our trade, and the advantageous course of our general payments. And the price of bullion fell, because the supply was superior to the demand. From the foregoing notices, an able statesman might have inferred beforehand, that Great Britain never possessed such resources, for a vigorous war. And this truth may be asserted, without fear of contradiction, and without appealing to the immensity of subsequent supplies, for unanswerable proofs of *the fact*.

The surplus produce of the land and labour of England alone, which, being exported to foreign countries, might have been applied to the uses of war, amounted to £.15,613,003, according to an average of the years 1772—3—4\*.

The British shipping, which were chiefly employed in exporting this immense cargo, and which were easily converted into transports, to armed ships, and to privateers, amounted annually to 795,943 tons: and this extensive nursery furnished the royal navy with mariners of unequalled skill and bravery, during a naval war, in the last year of which, the Parliament voted a hundred and ten thousand seamen.

We may calculate from the continual progress in population, arising from additional employ-

\* There was moreover sent by Sea from Scotland, at the same time, an annual cargo of the value of £.1,515,025, if we may believe the Custom-house books.

ments, that there were in this island, at the epoch of the colonial revolt, full 2,350,000 fighting men.

By examining the following details, we shall acquire ideas sufficiently precise of the royal navy, both before and after the war of the colonies began:—

*The royal fleet* carried in 1754 — 226,246 tons.  
                                   in 1760 — 300,416  
                                   in 1774 — 276,046.

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Of the king's ships, existing in 1774, several were found, on the day of trial, unfit for actual service. By an effort, however, which Britain alone could have made, there were added to the royal navy, during six years of war, from 1775 to 1781:—

	Vessels.	Guns.	Tons.
Of the line, with fifties,	44 carrying	3,002 and	56,144
Twenties to forty-fours,	110 —	3,331 —	53,350
Sloops - - - - -	160 —	2,555 —	37,160
	<hr/> 314	<hr/> 8,888	<hr/> 146,654

By a similar effort, during six years of the Revolution-war, England was only able to add to her naval force 11,368 tons. And thus, was there a greater fleet fitted out, during the uncommon embarrassments of the colony-war, than King William, or Queen Anne, or even than King George I. perhaps ever possessed. Of these ships  
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we were unhappily deprived of several, either by the misfortunes incident to navigation, or by the good fortune of our enemies. Yet, we had in commission, in January 1783, the fleet, the power of which will be most clearly perceived, from the following detail\*; when it is remembered, that there were voted, for the service of this year, a hundred and ten thousand seamen.

Ships.	Guns.	Men.
20 of - 80 to 108 -	carrying	15,372
44 of - - - 74 -	- - -	26,112
45 of - 60 to 68 -	- - -	24,320
18 of - - - 50 -	- - -	5,468
64 Frigates above 30 -	- - -	13,765
51 Ditto under 30 -	- - -	8,581
110 Sloops of - 18, and under,		11,360
15 Fireships and bombs.		
26 Armed ships, hired.		
<hr/> 393 - Navigated by	<hr/> - - - -	<hr/> 104,978 <hr/>

Such was the naval force of Great Britain, which, after a violent struggle, broke, in the end, the conjoined fleets of France, Spain, and Holland. The privateers of Liverpool, which have been already stated,

\* The above statement, though in a different form, was officially laid before the House of Commons, at the debate on *the peace*. Besides the ships in the list of the Navy-board, there were seventeen, from 60 to 98 guns, ready to be commissioned. Steel states, in his *Naval Chronology*, the force of

flated, alone formed a greater fleet than the armed colonies were ever able to equip. Owing to what fatality, or to what cause, it was, that the vast strength of Britain did not beat down the colonial insurgents, not in one campaign, but in three, it is the business of History to explain, with narrative elegance, and profound remark.

It is now time to inquire into the losses of our trade, from the war of those colonies, which had been planted, and nursed, with a mother's care, for the exclusive benefit of our commerce.

If it was not much interrupted by the privateers of the malcontents, we lost whole mercantile fleets to our enemies. And it must be admitted, that in the course of no war, since that of the Revolution, were our shipping so much deranged, or

of the fleets of Great Britain, France, Spain, and Holland, at the end of the war, as under :

	Of the line.		Guns.
British ships - - - - -	145	carrying	10,132
Deduct those wanting repairs,	28	—	1,948
	<hr/>		<hr/>
British effective - - - - -	117	—	8,184
	<hr/>		<hr/>
French - - - - -	82	—	5,848
Spanish - - - - -	67	—	4,720
Dutch - - - - -	33	—	2,006
	<hr/>		<hr/>
	182	—	12,574
Deduct those wanting repairs,	49	—	2,928
	<hr/>		<hr/>
More than Great Britain -	16	—	1,462
	<hr/>		<hr/>

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our traffic so far driven from its usual channels. But, we shall see the precise state of both, by attending to the following details :

	Years.	Ships cleared Outwards.			Value of Cargoes.
		Tons Eng.	Do foreign.	Total.	£
In the peaceful	{ 1772 73 74 }	795,943	- 64,232	- 860,175	- 15,613,003
American war	{ 1775 76 77 }	760,798	- 73,234	- 834,032	- 13,861,812
French war	- 1778	657,238	- 98,113	- 755,351	- 11,551,070
Spanish war	- 1779	590,911	- 139,124	- 730,035	- 12,693,430
	1780	619,462	- 134,515	- 753,977	- 11,622,333
Dutch war	- 1781	547,953	- 163,410	- 711,363	- 10,569,187
	1782	552,851	- 208,511	- 761,362	- 12,355,750

If we review this satisfactory evidence, we shall probably find, that there were annually employed, when the colony-war began, more than one hundred and fifty thousand tons of British shipping, than had been yearly employed, during the prosperous years 1764—5—6 ; and that we annually exported of merchandizes, in the first-mentioned period, more than in the last, little less than a million in value : That the colonial contest little affected our foreign commerce, if we may judge from the decreased state of our shipping\* ; but, if we draw our inference from the diminished value of exported cargoes, we seem to have lost £.1,751,190 a year ; which formed, perhaps, the real amount of the usual export to the discontented provinces : And the inconsiderable decrease

\* There were entered inwards of ships belonging to the revolted colonies, 34,587 tons, according to an average of the years 1771—2—3—4.

in the numbers of our outward shipping, with the fall in the value of manufactures, whereof their cargoes consisted, justified a shrewd remark of Mr. Eden's, "that, in the latter period it may be doubted, whether the dexterity of exporters, which, in times of regular trade, occasions ostentatious entries, may not, in many instances, have operated to under-valuations." It was the alarm created by the interference of France, that first interrupted our general commerce, though our navigation and trade, in 1778, were still a good deal more, than the average of both, in 1755—6—7. The prosperity of our foreign traffic, during the war of 1756, at least from the year 1758, is a fact, in our commercial annals, which has excited the amazement of the world. Yet, let us fairly contrast both our shipping, and our trade, great as they were assuredly, during the first period, and little as they have been supposed to be, during the last :

Years.	Ships cleared Outwards.			Value of Cargoes.	
	Tons Engl. sh.	D <sup>y</sup> foreign.	Total.	£.	
1758	- 389,842	- 116,002	- 505,844	- 12,618,335	
1778	- 657,238	- 98,113	- 755,351	- 11,551,070	
1759	- 406,335	- 121,016	- 527,351	- 13,947,788	
1779	- 590,911	- 139,124	- 730,035	- 12,693,430	
1760	- 471,241	- 102,737	- 573,978	- 14,639,970	
1780	- 619,462	- 134,515	- 753,977	- 11,622,333	
1761	- 508,220	- 117,835	- 626,055	- 14,873,191	
1781	- 547,953	- 163,410	- 711,363	- 10,569,187	
1762	- 480,444	- 120,126	- 600,570	- 13,545,171	
1782	- 552,851	- 208,511	- 761,362	- 12,355,750	

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What had occurred, from the interruptions of all our foregoing wars, equally occurred from the still greater embarrassments of the colony-war. Temporary defalcations were, in the same manner, said to be infallible symptoms of a fatal decline. In the course of former hostilities, we have seen our navigation, and commerce, pressed down to a certain point, whence both gradually rose, even before the return of peace removed the incumbent pressure. All this, an accurate eye may perceive, amid the commercial distresses of the last war. There was an evident tendency, in our traffic, to rise, in 1779, till the Spanish war imposed an additional burden. There was a similar tendency, in 1780, till the Dutch war added, in 1781, no inconsiderable weight. And the year 1781, accordingly, marks the lowest degree of depression, both of our navigation, and our commerce, during the war of our colonies. But, with the same vigorous spirit, they both equally rose, in 1782, as they had risen, in former wars, to a superiority over our navigation, and commerce, during the year, wherein hostilities with France began.

We have beheld, too, on the return of complete peace, the spring of our traffic rebound with mighty force. A considerate eye may see this, in 1783, and 1784, though the burdens of war were then removed with a much more tardy hand, than in 1763, and 1764. Twenty years before, the preliminaries of peace were settled, in November 1762, and the definitive treaty with France and Spain

Spain was signed, on the tenth of February thereafter: so that complete tranquillity was restored, early in 1763. But, owing to the greater number and variety of belligerent powers, the last peace was fully established, by much slower steps. The provisional articles were settled with the separated colonies, in November 1782. The preliminaries with France and Spain were adjusted, in January 1783. The definitive treaty with both, and with the United States of America, was signed on the third of September 1783. Though an armistice was agreed on with Holland, in February 1783, preliminaries were not settled till September thereafter, and the definitive treaty was not signed till the twenty-fourth of May 1784. And with Tippoo Saib, who was no mean antagonist, peace was not concluded till March 1784. It was not, however, till July 1784, that we offered thanks to the Almighty, for restoring to an harassed, *though not an exhausted nation*, the greatest blessing, which the Almighty can bestow.

To those dates, and to this fact, we must carefully attend, in forming comparative estimates of our navigation and commerce, of the price of the public stocks, or of the progress of our financial operations. With these recollections constantly in our mind, we shall be able to make some accurate reflections, from the following details :



Epochs.	Ships cleared Outwards.		Value of Cargoes.	
	Tons English.	D <sup>o</sup> foreign.	Total.	£.
1749 } 50 } 51 }	609,798 - 51,386 - 661,184 - 12,599,112.			
1764 } 65 } 66 }	639,872 - 68,136 - 708,008 - 14,925,950.			
1772 } 73 } 74 }	795,943 - 64,232 - 860,175 - 15,613,003.			
1783	795,669	157,969	953,638	13,851,671
84	846,355	113,064	959,419	14,171,375
85	951,855	103,398	1,055,253	15,762,593

If we examine the subjoined state of the Post-office revenue, we shall find supplemental proofs of increasing prosperity. The *gross* income of *the posts* amounted, in the year, ending

the 25 March	1755, to	- £. 210,663
— 5 April	1765, to	- 281,535
— 5 April	1775, to	- 345,321
— 5 April	1784, to	- 420,101
— 5 April	1785, to	- 463,753

The foregoing statements will surely furnish every honest mind with comfortable thoughts. From those accurate details we perceive, with sufficient conviction, how superior both our navigation and our commerce were, in 1783 and 1784, when peace had scarcely returned, to the extent of both, after the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, an epoch  
of

of boasted prosperity. We employed in our traffic, in the year 1784, THREE HUNDRED THOUSAND TONS more than we employed, according to the average of 1749—50—51, *exclusive of the shipping of Scotland*, to no small amount. Of *British* ships, we happily employed, in 1784, TWO HUNDRED THOUSAND TONS more than our navigation employed in 1764, though the vessels of our revolted colonies, amounting yearly to 35,000 tons, had been justly excluded from our traffic, in the last period, but not in the first: The value of exported cargoes from *England* was, at both epochs, nearly equal; though 1784 can scarcely be called a complete year of peace, and every industrious people had been admitted within the circle of a commerce, which we had almost ruined *the state* to make exclusively ours. The value of our exportations, in 1784, was not indeed equal to the amount of our exports in 1764, but they were superior to the value of exported cargoes in 1766, 1767, and 1769\*. If we compare 1784, when we had hardly recovered from a war, avowedly carried on against commerce, with 1774, when we had enjoyed uncommon prosperity, during several years of peace, we shall see no cause of apprehension, but many reasons of hope; the number of *British* ships was much inferior, in 1774, than they were in 1784, after we had wisely excluded the American vessels from the protection of the *British* flag, of which

\* See the Chronological Table for a proof of *the fact*.

the revolted colonists had shewn themselves unworthy. The value of cargoes, which were exported, at both the periods, are so nearly equal, as not to merit much consideration, far less to excite our fears.

Yet, the government was about the same time assuredly told \*, that, unless the American shipping were allowed to be our carriers, our traffic must stop, for want of transports : And the nation, for years, had been factiously informed, that the independence of the malecontent colonies must prove, at once the destruction of our commerce, and the downfall of our power.

It was the prevalence of this sentiment, that chiefly generated the colony-war, which was productive of so many evils, and which, like the other evils of life, have brought with them a happy portion of good. Yet, the fallacy of this sentiment had been previously shewn, from the deductions of reason, and the effects of the absolute independence of our trans-atlantic provinces, had been clearly foretold, from the experience of the past. Time has at length decided *the fact*. For, by comparing the exports to the *discontented colonies*, before the war began, with the exports to the *United States*, after the admission of their independence, it will appear, from the following detail, that we now

\* By the Committee of West-India Merchants, in 1783.

supply them with manufactures to a greater amount, than even in the most prosperous times : Thus,

	Exports.	Imports.
In 1771 } 72 } 73 }	£. — 3,064,843	£. — 1,322,532 ;
In 1784	— 3,397,500* —	— 749,329,

Yet, the exportations of the years 1771—2—3 were beyond example great, because the colonists were even then preparing for subsequent events, and the exporters were induced to make their entries at the custom-house, partly by their vanity, perhaps as much by their factiousness. We may reasonably hope, then, to hear no more of our having lost the American commerce, by the independence of the United States. From the epoch, that we have met industrious competitors in their ports, we have had too much reason to complain of having rather traded too much with a people, who affect to be great traders, without having great capitals.

Connected with the American trade is the Newfoundland fishery. Of this Doctor Price asserted, in his usual style of depreciation, and despondence, that *we seem to have totally lost it*. The subjoined detail, by establishing some authentic facts, will give rise, however, to more animating conclusions.

\* From the Custom-house books.



Contrast the Newfoundland fishery, as it was annually stated, subsequent to the peace of 1763, by Admiral Palliser, and as it was equally represented, after the peace of 1783, by Admiral Campbell :

COMPARATIVE STATE of the NEWFOUNDLAND FISHERY.

	In 1764 - 1784		1765 - 1785	
There were British <i>fish</i> ing ships -	141	236	177	292
British <i>trading</i> ships -	97	60	116	85
Colony ships - - -	205	50	104	58
Tonnage of British <i>fish</i> ing ships -	14,819	22,535	17,268	26,528
of British <i>trading</i> ships -	11,924	6,297	14,353	9,202
of Colony ships - - -	13,837	4,202	6,927	6,260
Quintals of fish carried to foreign markets - - - - -	470,188 - 497,884		491,654 - 591,276	

Thus, by excluding the fishers of the revolted colonies, we enjoy at present a more extensive fishery for the mariners of Great Britain, who, being subject to our influence, or our power, may easily be brought into action, when their efficacious aid becomes the most necessary, during war. From those colonies, a hundred and fifteen sloops and schooners used, annually, to bring cargoes of rum, melasses, bread, flour, and other provisions, to Newfoundland, for which the colonists were paid in bills of exchange on Britain\*. To acquire this traffic for British merchants, is alone a considerable advantage, which we derive from the independence of the United States. About twelve hundred

\* Admiral Palliser's official report.

sailors were accustomed to emigrate, every season, from Newfoundland to the separated colonies; where, whatever they might gain, their usefulness to Britain was lost. This drain, which is now shut up, is perhaps a still greater benefit.

Our Greenland fishery, which gives employment to so many useful people, both by land and sea, has been equally promoted by the absolute independence of the United States; as their oil and other marine productions no longer enter into competition with our own. Thus, there failed to the Greenland seas,

	Years.	Ships.		Years.	Ships.
From England in	1772 -	50 —	in	1782 -	38
	1773 -	55 —		1783 -	47
	1774 -	65 —		1784 -	89
	1775 -	96 —		1785 -	140
From Scotland	-	- —		1785 -	13
—————153					

From this accurate detail, we perceive, then, how much this important fishery, which had been heretofore depressed by various competitors\*, flourishes, at present, while we have additionally

\* The British fishery to Greenland has gained a manifest superiority over that of the Dutch, which was once so considerable. In 1781 and 1782 the Dutch sent no ships to the Greenland seas:

And in 1783 only 55 ships.  
 in 1784 - 59  
 in 1785 - 65

acquired

acquired the whale fishery to the Southern Seas.

Yet, the malecontent colonists, who had long been the active competitors of their fellow-subjects, in Great Britain, were accustomed to think that this island could not exist without the gains of their commerce. Foreign powers equally thought that they could ruin the affairs of Great Britain, by contributing to *their* independence. And to this source alone may be traced up one of the chief causes of the colony-war, and of the interference of foreigners. But, were we to search the annals of mankind, we should not find an example of hostilities, which being commenced, in opposition to the genuine interest of the belligerent parties, were continued, for years, in contradiction to common sense.

The leaders of the malecontents seem at length disposed to admit, that being hurried on by passion, they sacrificed their commerce, and their happiness, to fastidious prejudices, and to unmeaning words. Had they been sufficiently acquainted with their own interests, and governed by any prudence, they might, before the war began, have retained a participation in British privileges, and the protection of British power, by verbally admitting, that they were the fellow-subjects of the British people, without being really incumbered with any burden. And they might have thereby gained the late situation of Ireland, with the invaluable participations of Ireland; which, to estimate justly, we  
ought

ought only to suppose retracted for a season, or even lost for a day.

It is, indeed, fortunate for us, that the French were so much blinded by the splendour of giving independence to the British colonies, as not to see distinctly how much their interposition and their aid promoted the real advantage of Great Britain. When the colony-war began, the true interest of France consisted, in protracting the entanglements, which necessarily resulted from the virtual dependence of thirteen distant communities, claiming separate and sovereign rights; and which had continued to enfeeble the British government by their pretensions, their clamours, and their opposition, till the dissatisfied provincials had, in the fulness of time, separated themselves, without any effort on their part, or any struggle on the side of Great Britain. From these embarrassments, the French have however freed, by their impolicy, the rival nation. And they have even conferred on the people, whom they wished to depress, actual strength, by restoring, unconsciously, the ship-building, the freights, and the fisheries; of which the colonists had too much partaken, and which, with other facilities, have resulted to the mother-country, from the absolute independence of the American states.

Spain, perhaps, as little attended to her genuine interests, when she lent her aid to the associated powers, which enabled the revolted colonies to take their free and equal station among the sovereign



reign nations of the earth. She might have trusted to the hopes and fears of a British Minister, for the security of her trans-atlantic empire. But, within the American States, where can she place her trust? The citizens of these states have already, with their usual enterprize, penetrated to the banks of the Mississippi. And this active people even now bound on Louisiana, and Mexico; and may even now, by intrigue, or force, shake the fidelity, or acquire the opulence, of those extensive territories.

When the Dutch, by departing from their usual caution, interposed in the quarrel, every intelligent European perceived, that the discontented colonies must necessarily be independent. And it was equally apparent, that every advantage of their traffic must have soon been acquired, by the more industrious nations, without the risk of unneighbourly interference, and still more, without the charge of actual hostilities.

When all parties became at length weary of a war, which had thus been carried on contrary to their genuine interests, a peace was made. Whatever advantages of commerce, or of revenue, may have resulted from this memorable event to the other belligerent powers, certain it is, that though Great Britain contracted vast debts, and lost many lives in the contest, she derived from the independence of the American States many benefits, exclusive of domestic quiet, the greatest of all benefits.

Had

Had Great Britain, like Spain, received any public revenue from her trans-atlantic territories, she had doubtless lost this income by the independence of her Colonies. If Great Britain has thereby lost sovereignty, without jurisdiction, she has freed herself from the charges of protecting an extensive coast, without deducting any thing from her naval strength; since the colony sailors were protected by positive statute\* from being forced into the public service. While this nation has saved the annual expence of great military and civil establishments, it can hardly be said to have lost any commercial profits. And, by excluding the citizens of the United States, from their accustomed participation, in the gainful business of ship-building, freights, and fishery, Great Britain has, in fact, made considerable additions to her naval power. Thus, the means, which were used to enfeeble this country, have actually augmented its strength, whatever may have been the fate of the other belligerent parties.

It must be admitted, however, that the British government contracted immense debts by carrying on the late most expensive war. When these were brought to account, in October 1783, the whole debts, payable at the Exchequer, amounted to £.212,302,429 capital; whereon were paid

\* The 6th Anne, which had conferred the above-mentioned exemption, was indeed repealed at the commencement of the war, by the 15 Geo. III. ch. 31. § 19.

£.8,012,061\*, as interest and charges of management. For the payment of this annuity, the legislature had provided funds, which, it must be allowed, did not produce a revenue equal to previous expectation, or to subsequent necessity. And, burdensome as these debts undoubtedly were, they had little embarrassed general circulation, had this principle, and this annuity, formed the only claims on the public, which had arisen from the colony-war.

But, every war leaves many unliquidated claims, which are the more distressful to individuals and the state, as these unfunded debts float in the stock-market at great discount; as they depreciate the value of all public securities; and as, from these circumstances, they obstruct the financial operations of government, and prevent private persons from borrowing for the most useful purposes of productive industry. Of such unfunded debts, there floated in the market, in October 1783, no less than £.18,856,542; of which £.15,694,112 were so far liquidated as to carry an interest, that continually augmented the capitals, exclusive of other claims, which were equally cogent, but of less amount.

The public securities, which always rise in value, on the return of peace, gradually fell, when those vast debts were exposed to the world, in exagge-

\* The Exchequer account, as published by the commissioners of public accounts.

rated figures ; when the stockholders were terrified by declamations on the defects of their security, which is, in fact, equal to the stability of the British State ; and when all claimants on the public were daily assured of a truth, which had then too much existence, that the annual income of the public was not equal to the annual expenditure. The late Earl of Stair was the writer, who most industriously laid such considerations before the world. “ If the premises are just,” said he, “ or “ nearly just, and nothing effectual is done to prevent their consequences, the inevitable conclusion “ is, that *the State is a bankrupt*, and those, who “ have entrusted their all to the public faith, are “ in imminent danger of becoming (I die pronouncing it) *beggars*\*.”

———The wasp the hive *alarms*

With louder hums, and with unequal arms.

The nation was mortified, at the same time, by the events of a war, the mismanagements, and expences, of which had made peace absolutely necessary. And the government was at once enfeebled, by distractions, and unhinged, by the competitions of the great, for pre-eminence, and power.

It was at this crisis of unusual difficulty, that the late minister was called into office, nearly

\* An argument to prove, that it is the indispensable duty of the creditors of the public, to insist that Government do forthwith bring forward the Consideration of the State of the Nation. By John Earl of Stair, 1783.



as much by the suffrages of his country, as by the appointment of his sovereign.

Were we to institute a comparison of the state of the nation, in 1764 and 1765, with the financial operations in 1784 and 1785, we should be enabled to form a proper judgment, not only of the incumbrances, and resources, of the British government, but of the measures, which were at both periods adopted, for discharging our debts, by applying our means.

The war of 1756 augmented the public debt

	£. 72,111,004
of 1775	- - - - - 110,279,341

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In 1764, the *unfunded* debts, including German claims, navy and ordnance debt, army extraordinary, deficiencies of grants and funds, exchequer bills, and a few smaller articles, amounted to - - - - - £. 9,975,018.

In 1784, the *unfunded* debts, including every article of the same kind, amounted to - - - - - 24,585,157.

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The navy bills sold, in 1764, at  $9\frac{3}{8}$  per cent. discount; in 1784, at 20 per cent. The value of 3 per cent. consolidated stocks, from which the most accurate judgment of all stocks may be formed, was in 1764 at 86 per cent.; but, in 1784, the value may be calculated at 54 per cent. In the first period, our agriculture and manufactures, our commerce

commerce and navigation; were said to be in the most prosperous condition; in the last, to be almost undone.

With the foregoing data before us, we shall be able, without any minute calculations, or tedious inquiry, to form an adequate judgment of the resources of the nation, and of the conduct of ministers, in applying these resources to the public service, at the conclusion of our two last wars.

In 1764—65, there were paid off, and provided for,\* - - - - - £. 6,192,159;  
In 1784—85 - - - - - † 28,139,448.

There remained unprovided for,

	in 1765,	—	in 1785,
German claims	£. 156,044	—	£.
Navy debt - -	2,426,915	—	
Exchequer bills -	1,800,000	—	4,500,000
<hr/>			<hr/>
Total in both	£. 4,382,959*	—	£. 4,500,000
<hr/>			<hr/>

\* Confid. on Trade and Finances, p. 41.

† The following are the particulars, from the annual grants and appropriation acts:

Debts funded in 1784, - - - - -	£. 6,879,342.
Debts paid off, and otherwise provided for, in	
1784, - - - - -	5,728,615.
Debts funded, in 1785, - - - - -	10,990,651.
Debts paid off, and otherwise provided for, in	
1785, - - - - -	4,540,840.
<hr/>	
Total of debts paid off, funded, and other- wise provided for, in 1784—85, - - }	£. 28,139,448.
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But, let us carry this comparison one step farther. There were paid off, and provided for, (as we have seen,) in 1764 and 1765, of *unfunded* debts, - - - - - £. 6,192,159.  
 There were afterwards paid off, before 1776, - - - - - 10,739,793.

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Total paid off, in eleven years, - £. 16,931,952.  
 There were paid off, and provided for, in two years, 1784—85, - 28,139,448.

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Yet, from this last sum, must be deducted the £. 4,500,000 of Exchequer bills, which, being continued, at the end of 1785, were either circulated by the Bank, or were, in the course of public business, locked up in the Exchequer. Those bills, indeed, that passed into circulation, were of real use to the Bank, and to individuals, without depreciating funded property, as they continually passed, from hand to hand, at a premium.

There was no purpose, when the foregoing comparisons were instituted, of exalting the character of the late minister, for wisdom, and energy, by the degradation of any of his predecessors, for inanity of purpose, and inefficiency of performance. The able men, who managed the national finances from 1763 to 1776, acted like all former statesmen, from the circumstances, wherein they were placed, and probably made as great exertions, in discharging the national debts, as the spirit of the times

admitted. Greater efforts have, since the last peace, been made, because every wise man declared, that there was no other effectual mode of securing all that the nation holds dear, than by making the public income larger than the public expenditure. The before-mentioned operations of finance, in 1784 and 85, it had been impossible to perform, without imposing many taxes, which all parties demanded as necessary. Were any defence required for a conduct, which, if the faithful discharge of duty, at no small risk of personal credit, be laudable, merits the greatest praise, the previous necessity would furnish ample justification.

What had occurred, at the conclusion of every war, since the Revolution, happened in a still greater degree, since the re-establishment of the last peace. Let us make haste to lighten the public debts, which so much enfeeble the state, and embarrass individuals, was the universal cry. It was the judgment of the wisest men, that, considering the magnitude of the national incumbrances, those debts could neither be paid off, nor greatly lessened, except by a sinking fund, which should be invariably applied to this most useful purpose. And, great as the national debts were, amounting to £. 239,154,880 principal, which, for interest and charges of management, required an annuity of £. 9,275,769, after all the financial operations of 1784 and 85, a sinking fund of a million was said to be fully sufficient, if thus sacredly



applied; as the productive powers of money, at compound interest, are almost beyond calculation.

Animated by such representations, and urged by sense of duty, the minister, though struggling with the embarrassing effects of a tedious, and unsuccessful war, which, in the judgment of very experienced men, had almost exhausted every national resource, has established a sinking-fund of a million. Whatever might have been the universal wish, no one, at the re-establishment of the peace, had any reasonable expectation, that so large a sinking-fund would be thus early settled, by act of parliament, on principles, which at once promote the interest of the public, by diminishing the national debt, and forward the advantage of individuals, by creating a rapid circulation.

Of other sinking-funds, it has been remarked, that they did not arise so much from the surpluses of taxes, after paying the annuity, which they had been established to pay, as from a reduction of the stipulated interest. The sinking funds, that had been established in Holland, during 1655, and at Rome, in 1685, were thus created. The well-known sinking-fund, which had its commencement here, in 1716, was equally created, by the reduction of interest, on many stocks. And hence has been inferred the insufficiency of such funds. But, the foundation of Mr. Pitt's sinking-fund is firmly laid on a clear surplus of a permanent revenue, made good by new taxes, and on the constant appropriation of  
such

such annuities as, from time to time, revert to the public, from the effluxion of years.

The sufficiency, and sacredness, of this fund may be however inferred, not so much from any artificial reasoning, as from the nature of the trusts, and from the spirit of the people, which ever guards, with anxiety, what has been dedicated to their constant security, and future glory. The sinking-fund of 1716 was left to the management of ministers, who found an interest, in misapplying it. Mr. Pitt's sinking-fund has been entrusted to six commissioners, holding offices, which are no way connected with each other, and to the possessors of which, the people look for fidelity, knowledge, and responsibility. From such trustees no misapplication, or jobbing, can reasonably be apprehended. Eighteen years have almost elapsed, since the establishment of their authority, and neither jobbing, nor mismanagement, has been suspected by malice, or faction. Add to this, that the commissioners, being required by law to lay out the appropriated money in a specified manner, and to give an annual account of their transactions to Parliament, act under the eye of a jealous world, and under the censure of an independent press, which, in a free country, has an efficacy beyond the penalties of the legislature.

But, the act itself, which creates this fund, and makes those provisions, may be repealed, it is feared, by the rapacity of future ministers, or by

the distress of subsequent wars. Against this objection experience has also given its decision.

It is, however, no small security of the present sinking-fund, that the impolicy of misapplying the former is admitted with universal conviction, and regret. Under this public opinion, no minister, whatever his principles, or his power, may be, will ever attempt the repeal of a law, which, in fact, contains a virtual contract with the public creditors, and on the existence of which the public credit must, in future, depend: For the repeal of this act, and the seizure of this fund, during the pressures of any war, would be a manifest breach of this contract; and would amount to a bankruptcy; because it would be a declaration to the world, that the nation could no longer comply with her most sacred engagements. And what evil is to be feared, or good expected, from any war, which ought to stand in competition with the evils of bankruptcy, or the good that must necessarily result from the invariable application of such a fund? A million, thus applied, will assuredly free the public from vast debts, and, in no long period, yield a great public revenue: It is demonstrable, that a sinking-fund of a million, with the aid of such annuities as must meanwhile fall in, will set free *four millions* annually, at the end of twenty-seven years: It has been demonstrated by ingenious calculators, that the invariable application of a million to the annual payment of debts,

would,

would, in sixty years, discharge £. 317,000,000 of 3 *per cent.* annuities, the price being at 75 *per cent.* In eight years, Mr. Pitt's sinking-fund, in fact, purchased £. 13,617,895 of stock, at the expence of £. 10,599,265 of cash. This measure, then, is of more importance to Great Britain, than the acquisition of the American mines. And, this measure, thus sacred in its principles, and salutary in its effects, will not probably be soon repealed by the influence of any minister; because all orders in the state are pledged to support it, while the property of every man in the community is bound for payment of the national debt.

Without inquiring minutely, whether a surplus of £. 900,000 appeared in the exchequer on any given day, it is sufficiently apparent, that all the purposes of this measure of finance will be amply answered, by the punctual payment of £. 250,000 in every quarter to the trustees, as the law requires; because the Parliament are engaged by the act to make good the deficiency, if the surplus of the sinking-fund should in any year amount to less than a million. The fact is, that £. 250,000 have been punctually applied, every quarter, since it began to operate, on the 1st of August 1786. Additional sums have meantime been thrown into the sinking-fund, for giving a quicker pace to its powerful operations. And, by these means, has it produced, at the end of eight years, much greater effects than some calculators originally conceived, from



taking narrow views of a most extensive prospect\*.

Little fluctuation in the funds will be created by sending into the Stock Exchange a certain sum, on certain days, during every quarter. It is the great

\* Earl Stanhope was the calculator, who urged every objection against this sinking-fund with the most ingenuity, and force; having a plan of his own to propose. His lordship formed a calculation, in order to show the effect of a surplus of £. 1,000,000 a year, with such long annuities as might fall in. The following detail will show the amount of his calculation, and the sum total of the fact, from experience, of stock actually bought, at the end of every year.

Eight Years.	Earl Stanhope's Calculations.	Eight Years.	The fact, from experience.
	£.		£.
5th April 1787	1,000,000	4th Quarter.	1,343,100
D <sup>o</sup> - 1788	2,065,351	8th D <sup>o</sup> -	2,874,150
D <sup>o</sup> - 1789	3,173,316	12th D <sup>o</sup> -	4,447,150
D <sup>o</sup> - 1790	4,325,599	16th D <sup>o</sup> -	5,997,900
D <sup>o</sup> - 1791	5,527,230	20th D <sup>o</sup> -	7,568,875
D <sup>o</sup> - 1792	6,792,613	24th D <sup>o</sup> -	9,441,850
D <sup>o</sup> - 1793	8,145,898	28th D <sup>o</sup> -	11,196,165
D <sup>o</sup> - 1794	9,553,314	32d D <sup>o</sup> -	13,617,895

Thus, hath the event decided against Earl Stanhope's calculations and plan, by a balance of £. 4,064,581, in eight years operations. Lord Stanhope estimated, that there would be redeemed by the sinking-fund, on the 5th of April, 1803,—£. 25,043,498: But, there were, in fact, redeemed by it, on the 1st of February, 1803, no less than £. 86,922,868: and, on the 1st of February, 1804, £. 100,901,854; the Sinking Fund, amounting to £. 1,600,000 a quarter. And, this experience is alone sufficient to satisfy us how little the *theories* of *speculatists* ought to be allowed to actuate the practice of life, or the movements of legislation.

rise,

rise, and the proportional fall, in the value of the stocks, which enable jobbers to gain fortunes. And, of consequence, the commissioners will hardly find it their interest, if they had the inclination, to deal in public securities with a view to great profits \*. If the gradual and steady rise of the stocks be for the interest of the public, as well as of individuals, the quarterly application of the new fund must be deemed a great improvement of the old, which was seldom felt in the stock market, and gave little motion to general circulation. By these means, will the capitals of the public debts be rendered more manageable, in no long period; the price of stocks must necessarily rise; the finance operations of government will thereby be performed with still greater advantage to the state; and industrious individuals will, in the same manner, be more easily accommodated with discounts, and with loans.

The establishment of such a fund, and the creation of such a trust, are doubtless very important services to the people, collectively, as they form a corporation, or community. But, it may be easily

\* The purchases being confined to the transfer days, little more than £. 5,000 can be brought to market on any one day, which of consequence can make no rapid rise of any one stock; And, when the sinking fund amounts to £. 4,000,000, the purchase-money on any day can only be something more than £. 20,000.—The gradual application of this sinking-fund is an excellent quality of it, because sudden changes in the stock-market are not for the interest of real buyers, or sellers. The commissioners therefore can gain little profit, from their superior knowledge of the stock into which they intend to purchase.

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shewn, that the people, individually will be still greater gainers, by the new sinking fund, as it has been thus judiciously formed. And, in this view of the subject, its steady operation will be of still greater utility to the nation, than even the payment of debts, because it is the prosperity of individuals, which forms the real wealth of the state. The ingenious theorists, who oblige the world with projects, for paying the national debt, consider merely the interest of the corporation, or public, without attending to what is of more importance, the advantage of the private persons, of whom the public consist. Of Mr. Pitt's sinking-fund, it is one of the greatest commendations, that it promotes the true interest of both parties, in just proportions.

A new order of buyers being thus introduced, and a new demand being thereby created, the price of stocks must necessarily rise, notwithstanding the arts of the stockjobbers; because the public securities become in fact of more real value. In proportion as the money is sent from the sinking-fund to the stock-exchange, the price of stocks must gradually rise still higher. And a rise of stocks, when gradual, and steady, never fails to produce the most salutary effects on universal circulation, by facilitating transfers of property, and by aiding the performance of contracts. Recent experience confirms this general reasoning. Every one must remember how impossible it was for individuals to borrow money on any security, for any premium, till towards the end of 1784. When the stocks began



began to rise, the price of lands equally rose. When the government ceased to borrow, and the unfunded debts were liquidated, manufacturers and traders easily obtained discounts, and readily acquired permanent capitals.

But, the wisdom of man could not have devised a measure more favourable to circulation, than the sending of large sums, from day to day, into the Stock Exchange; whereby the course of circulation is constantly filled, and, being always augmented, becomes still more rapid. It is the rise of stocks, and the fulness of circulation, which make money overflow the coffers of the opulent, unless some unforeseen drain should be unhappily opened. When cash becomes thus plenty, the natural interest of money gradually falls, and bills of exchange, and other private securities, are readily discounted, at a lower rate. In this happy state of things, money is said to be plenty; and every individual is accommodated with loans, and with discounts, according to his needs, by pledging his property, or his credit.

Owing to all those facilities, every industrious man easily finds employments. The manufacturers are all engaged. The traders send out additional adventures. The ship-owners are offered many freights. The produce of the husbandman is consumed by a busy people. And thus are rents more readily paid, and taxes more easily collected. Such are the benefits, which result to individuals, and the state, from a rapid circulation, that  
can



can only be promoted, and preserved, by sending money constantly into the Stock Exchange. It is thus, by inciting an active industry, that the payment of public debts, through the channel of a quarterly sinking-fund, enables the people to pay the greatest taxes with ease, and satisfaction. And thus, may we solve a difficult problem in political œconomy, whether the surplus of the public revenue ought to be applied in the discharge of debts, or in the diminution of taxes: the one measure assuredly invigorates the industry of the people, in the manner, that we have just observed; the other may promote their indolence, but cannot procure them an advantage, in any proportion to the benefits of unceasing employments, and the accommodation of more extensive capitals: by means of industry the heaviest burthens seem light: by the influence of sloth the slightest duty appears intolerable.

It was owing, probably, to the invigorating effects of an augmented circulation, that our agriculture and manufactures, our commerce and navigation, not only flourished, but gradually increased, to their present magnitude, amidst our frequent wars, our additional taxes, and accumulating debts. How much the scanty circulation of England was filled, during the great civil wars of the last century, by the vast imposts of those times, and how soon the interest of money was thereby reduced, we have already seen. Similar consequences followed the wars of William, and of Anne,

Anne, owing to similar causes. The sinking-fund, which, for several years after its creation, in 1716, did not much exceed half a million, produced, assuredly, the most salutary influences, even before the year 1727: The value of the public funds rose considerably, though the stipulated interest on them had been reduced, first, from 6 to 5 *per cent.* and, in that year, from 5 to 4 *per cent.* The natural interest of money gradually fell: The price of lands in the mean time advanced from 20 and 21 years purchase to 26 and 27: And our agriculture and manufactures, our trade and our shipping, kept a steady pace with the general prosperity of the nation \*. Such are the salutary effects of a circulation, which, being replenished by daily augmentations, is preserved constantly full. And thus it is, that the people are eased in the payment of taxes, by being better enabled to pay them, while taxes are continually augmented, though there may be some imposts, which ought to be repealed, as they press upon particular objects.

On the other hand, an obstructed circulation never fails to create every evil, which can afflict an industrious people: Scarcity of money, and unfavourable discounts; unpurchased manufactures, and want of employments; unpaid rents, and unperformed contracts; are the mischiefs, which distress every individual, and embarrass the community, while circulation is impeded. The com-

\* For the above-mentioned facts, see And. Chron. Com. vol. ii. p. 316—22.

merce of England was well nigh ruined, during King William's reign, by the disorders in the coin, the want of confidence, and the high price of money. The foreign bankruptcies, in 1763, reduced the value of cargoes, which were exported in this year, from sixteen millions to fourteen, during several years, owing to the decline of general credit. How much the domestic business of Great Britain was embarrassed by the bankruptcies of 1772 and 1773, which, in England, amounted, in the first year, to 525, and to 562, in the second, is still remembered\*. The complaints, which were, at those periods, made of a decline of commerce, were merely owing to an obstructed circulation, as subsequent experience hath amply evinced.

Wars, then, in modern times, are chiefly destructive, as they incommode the industrious class.

\* The following detail is alone sufficient to demonstrate how the manufactures of a country may be ruined by a languid circulation, without the interruptions of war. Of linen cloth, there were stamped for sale in Scotland.

during 1771	—	13,466,274 yards.	—
1772	—	13,089,006.	
1773	—	10,748,110.	
1774	—	<u>11,422,115.</u>	

Of woollen cloth, there were fulled, in the West Riding of Yorkshire, in the year ended

		Broad.	Narrow.
the 25th March 1792,	-	203,623 pieces	156,475 pieces
Ditto - 1793,	-	214,851 —	190,468
Ditto - 1794,	-	<u>190,332 —</u>	<u>150,666</u>

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ses, by obstructing circulation. Yet, general industry was not much retarded, however individual persons, or particular communities, may have been deranged, or injured, by the colony-war. The people were able to consume abundantly, since they actually paid vast contributions, by their daily consumption of exciseable commodities\*. And though they pursued their accustomed occupations, and thus paid vast imposts, the established income of the state sustained considerable defalcations from various causes; from the abuses, which war never fails to introduce into certain branches of the revenue; from the illicit traffic, that generally prevails in the course of hostilities; and from the new impositions, which somewhat lessen the usual produce of the old.

\* Of malt there were consumed,

	Bush.	Old Duties.
in 1773—4—5 ———	72,588,010 —	£.1,814,700.
in 1780—1—2 ———	87,343,083 —	2,183,577.
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Of low wines from corn.

	Gal.	Old Duties.
in 1773—4—5 ———	9,974,237 —	£.415,593.
in 1780—1—2 ———	11,757,499 —	489,895.
	<hr/>	<hr/>

Of Soap,

	lb.	Old Duties.
in 1773—4—5 ———	93,190,140 —	£.582,438.
in 1780—1—2 ———	98,076,806 —	612,980.
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Those disorders, in the public revenue, have been at least palliated, if they have not been altogether cured, since the re-establishment of peace. The measures, which were vigorously adopted, for the effectual prevention of smuggling; the alterations, which have been made in the collection of some departments of the public income; and the improvement, that has been happily effected in all, have brought, and continue to bring, vast sums into the Exchequer\*. The public expenditure continually distributes this vast revenue among the creditors, or servants of the State, who return it to the original contributors, either for the necessities, or the luxuries, of life. The Exchequer, which thus constantly receives and dispenses this immense income, has been aptly compared to the human heart, that unceasingly carries on the vital circulation, so invigorating while it flows, so fatal when it stops. Thus it is, that modern taxes, which are never hoarded, but always expended, may even promote the employments and industry, the prosperity and populousness, of an industrious people.

\* The whole public revenue paid into the Exchequer,

from Michaelmas 1783	}	—£. 12,995,519
to ditto 1784		
Ditto, from Michaelmas 1784	}	— 15,379,182
to ditto 1785		
Ditto, from 5 January 1785	}	— 15,397,471
to ditto 1786		

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## CHAP. XI.

*The Controversy on the Populousness of Britain revived.—The Parties.—A Review of their Publications.—An Examination of the Argument—from Reasoning—from Facts—from Experience.—The augmented Populousness of Ireland.—The Increase of People in Scotland.—The general Result—as to England.*

THE Contest, which had been carried on, during the war of 1756, between Doctor Brackenridge, and Doctor Forster, with regard to the effects of our policy, both in war, and in peace, on population, was revived, amidst our Colony contests, by Doctor Price, and his opponents. This last controversy furnishes much more instruction, with regard to a very interesting subject, than the former; as the disputants took a wider range, and collected, in their course, many new facts. Doctor Price revived the dispute, by contributing an Appendix to Mr. Morgan's Essay on Annuities, wherein the Doctor attempted to prove, by ingenious remarks on births and burials, a gradual decline in the populousness of Great Britain. He was soon encountered by Mr. Arthur Young, who justly inferred, from the progress of improvements

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in agriculture, in manufactures, and in commerce, an augmentation, in the number of people. Mr. Eden published, in 1779, elegant criticisms\* on Doctor Price; by which he endeavoured to invalidate the argument, that had been drawn from a comparison of the number of houses, at the Revolution, and at present; insisting that the first must have been less, and the last much greater, than the text had allowed. In his reply, the Doctor shewed some mistakes in his antagonist, without adding much to the force of his argument. Yet, if we may credit his coadjutor, who entered zealously into all his prejudices, *he considered his system as more firmly established than ever* †.

This long-continued controversy now found other supporters. Mr. Wales published his *Accurate Inquiry*, in 1781. With considerable success, he overthrows Doctor Price's fundamental argument, from the comparison of houses, at different periods; by shewing, that the returns of houses to the tax-office are not always precise; by proving, from actual enumerations of several towns, at distant periods, that they had certainly increased; by evincing, from the augmented number of births, that there must be a greater number of breeders. This able performance was immediately followed by Mr. Howlet's still more extensive examination of Doctor Price's essay. Mr.

\* In his Letters to Lord Carlisle.

† Uncertainty of Population, p. 9.

Howlet expands the arguments of Mr. Wales; he adds some illustrations; and, what is of still greater importance, in every inquiry, he establishes many additional facts.

The treatises of Mess. Wales and Howlet made a great impression on the public, as facts, in opposition to speculations, must ever make. At the moment, when their publications had gained—*a considerable share of popular belief*, it was deemed prudent, on the side of Doctor Price, to publish—*Uncertainty of the present population*. This writer frankly declares that, *he is convinced by neither party*, and that he must, consequently, remain *in a state of doubt and sceptical suspense*. His apparent purpose is to shew, in opposition to *the popular belief*, that after all our researches, *we really know nothing with any certainty*, as to this important part of our political œconomy. In the sceptical arithmetic of this dubious computer, 1,300,000, when multiplied by 5, produce 6,250,000. Doctor Price, and his coadjutors, seemed unwilling to admit, that if there were, in England and Wales, at Lady-day 1690, 1,300,000 *inhabited houses*, and *five persons* in each, there must necessarily have been, at the same time, 6,500,000 souls. For, they feared the charge of absurdity, in supposing a decrease of *a million and a half of people*, during ninety years of *augmented employments*: And, they perceived, that by admitting there were, in 1690, six million and a half of people, they would thereby be obliged to admit, that there had been an augmentation of a million



and a half, during the foregoing century, notwithstanding the long civil wars, and the vast emigrations. The Doctor published, in 1783, Remarks on these tracts of Mess. Wales and Howlet\*. And, with his usual acuteness, he detects some mistakes; but, with his accustomed pertinacity, he adheres to his former opinions.

The matter in dispute, we are told †, must be determined, not by vague declamation, or speculative argument, but by well-authenticated facts: For, “the grand argument of Dr. Price is at once extremely clear, and comprehended in a very narrow compass.” The following is the state of this *grand argument*:

That there appeared by the Hearth-books, at Lady	
Day 1690, to be in England and	Houses.
Wales - - - - -	1,300,000;
That there appeared by the Tax-	
office books, in 1777, only - -	952,734:

Whence, the Doctor inferred, as a necessary consequence, that there had been a proportional diminution of people, since 1690.

Considering how important this subject is to the state, and how much it is connected with the general purpose of this Estimate, I was led to examine, at once, with minuteness, and with brevity, an argu-

\* In his Observations on Reversionary Payments, in 2 vols. 8vo.

† By *Uncertainty of Population*.

ment, which has been ostentatiously displayed, as equal in its inferences to the certainty of actual enumerations.

In lieu of the obnoxious hearth-tax, the Parliament imposed, in 1696, a duty of two shillings on every house; six shillings on every house, containing ten windows, and fewer than twenty; and ten shillings on every house having more than twenty windows; those *occupiers* only excepted, who were exempted from church and poor rates. And Gregory King computed, with his usual precision, what the tax would produce, before it had yielded a penny\*: Thus, says he, the number of *inhabited houses* is - - - - - 1,300,000; whereof, under 10 windows 980,000; under 20 windows 270,000; above 20 windows 50,000.

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1,300,000

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### Out of which deducting,

for those receiving alms - - - -	330,000 houses at 2s.	£. 33,000
for those not paying to church and poor	380,000 ——— at 2s. 4d.	44,000
for omissions, frauds, and defaulters -	40,000 ——— at 4s.	8,000

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Insolvent - - - - -	750,000	£. 85,000
Solvent - - - - -	550,000; paying nett	- 119,000

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However, many *insolvent* houses were thus deducted from the 1,300,000 *inhabited houses*, Gregory King allowed, at last, too many *solvent* ones. This truth may be inferred, from the following *facts*.

\* Pol. Observ. Brit. Mus. Harl. MSS. N° 1898.

There remains in the tax-office\* a particular account of the money, which each county paid in 1701, for the before-mentioned tax of 1696, from the assessments of Lady-day 1700, and which amounted to - - - - - £. 115,226

But, the oldest list of houses, which specifically paid the tax of 1696, is "*an account made up, for 1708, from an old survey book,*" but from prior assessments: And this account stands thus:

Houses at 2s. —	248,784,	produced	£. 24,878
6s. —	165,856,	—————	49,757
10s. —	93,876,	—————	46,398
		—————	—————
	508,516,	producing	£. 121,033
		—————	—————

He who does not see a marvellous coincidence †, between this official document and the previous calculation of Gregory King, must be blind indeed. The *solvent* houses of King, and the *charged* houses of 1708, are of the same kind, both being those houses, which *actually paid*, or were supposed to have paid, the tax. And, Mr. Henry Reid, a

\* I have ransacked the tax-office for information on this litigated but important subject; and I was assisted in my researches by the intelligent officers of this department, with an alacrity, which shewed, that, having fully performed their duty to the public, they did not fear minute inspection.

† The houses having *upwards* of twenty windows, in the tax office account of 1781, are 52,373. The number of the same kind allowed by King is 50,000: But he is not so fortunate in his other calculations.

comptroller of the tax-office, who was noted for his minute diligence, and attentive accuracy, reported to *the Treasury*, in October 1754, that *the old duties*, on an average, produced yearly, from 1696 to 1709, - - - - - £. 118,839\*.

But, there must have necessarily been a great many more houses, in 1708, than the 508,516, *charged*, and *paying* £. 121,033. In the *twelve* years, from 1696, there could have been no great *waste* of houses, however powerful the destructive cause might have been. And Gregory King, in order to make up his thirteen hundred thousand houses, calculated the *dwellings of the poor*, in 1696, at - - - - - 710,000; and of defaulters, &c. at - - - - - 40,000;

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750,000.

Davenant † stated, in 1695; from the hearth-books, the cottages, *inhabited by the poorer sort*, at 500,000; and he afterwards asserts, as Doctor Price observed, that there were, in 1689, houses, called cottages, having *one* hearth, to the number of 554,631: whence we may equally suppose, that there were dwellings, having two hearths, a very considerable number, whose inhabitants, either receiving alms, or paying nothing, did not contribute to the tax of 1696: so that, in 1708, there must have certainly existed 710,000 dwellings of the poor; as this number had certainly existed in 1696.

\* Gregory King calculated the tax beforehand at £. 119,000.

† Vol. i. edit. 1st, p. 5.



Mr. Henry Reid moreover reported to the Treasury, in 1754, that in the year 1710, when an additional duty took place, it became an universal practice to stop up lights; so that, in 1710, the old duties yielded only £. 115,675:—And for some years, both the old, and the new, duty suffered much from this cause, 'as there was no penalty for the stopping of windows. Other duties, continues he, were imposed in 1747\*; so that from Lady-day 1747, to Lady-day 1748, the whole duties yielded £. 208,093: and, an explanatory act having passed in 1748, the duties yielded, for the year ending at Lady-day 1749, £. 220,890: But, other modes of evading the law being soon found, the duties decreased year after year.—And thus much from the intelligent Mr. Henry Reid, who never dreamed of houses falling into non-existence.

The first account of houses, which now appears to have been made up, subsequent to that of 1708, is the account of 1750, and the last is that of 1781. With the foregoing data before us, we may now

\* By the 20 Geo. II. ch. 3; which recites, that whereas it hath often been found from experience, that the duties granted by former acts of parliament have been greatly lessened by means of persons frequently stopping up windows in their dwelling houses, in order to evade payment; and it hath often happened, that several assessments have not been made in due time; and that persons remove to other parishes without paying the duty for the houses so quitted, to the prejudice of the Revenue. But the legislature do *not* recite, that houses daily fell down, or that the numbers of the people yearly declined.

form

form a judgment sufficiently precise, in respect to the progress of our houses, *charged* and *chargeable* with the house and window tax :

The charged, in 1696, according to King, 550,000

The chargeable, *according to him*, - 40,000

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590,000

The charged, and chargeable, in 1750, 729,048\*

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Increase in 54 years - - 139,048

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The charged, in 1708 - - - 508,516

The chargeable, let us suppose - 100,000

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608,516

The charged, and chargeable, in 1781, 721,351

---

Increase in 73 years - - 112,835.

Here, then, is a solution of the difficult problem, in political œconomy, which has engaged so many able pens, Whether there exist as many houses, at present, as there certainly were, in England and Wales, at the Revolution; at least, the question is decided, as to the number of houses, *charged* and *chargeable* with the window and house tax: And, of consequence, the middling and higher ranks of

\* This high number, in 1750, was probably owing to the act of parliament, 20 Geo. II. which had just passed, when new modes of circumvention had not yet taken place.

men must, with the number of their dwellings, have necessarily increased.

A great difficulty, it must be admitted, still remains, which cannot be altogether removed, though many obstructions may be cleared away. The difficulty consists, in ascertaining, with equal precision, the number of dwellings which have been exempted, by law, from every tax, since 1690, on account of the poverty of the dwellers. The litigated point must at last be determined by an answer to the question, Whether the lower orders are more numerous in the present day, than they were in 1690?

A modern society has been compared, with equal elegance and truth, to a pyramid, having the higher ranks for its point, and the lower orders for its base. Gregory King left us an account of the people, minutely divided into their several classes, which, though formed for a different purpose, contains sufficient accuracy for the present argument\*.

\* Davenant's works, 6 vol, Scheme D, which was copied from Gregory King's Observations, p. 15, with some inaccuracies.

RANKS,	Number of Families.	Heads in each.	Number of Persons.
Spiritual lords - -	26	20 -	520
Temporal lords -	160	40 -	6,400
Knights - - -	600	13 -	7,800
Baronets - - -	800	16 -	12,800
Eminent clergymen	2,000	6 -	12,000
Eminent merchants	2,000	8 -	16,000
Esquires - - -	3,000	10 -	30,000
Gentlemen - - -	12,000	8 -	96,000
Military officers -	4,000	4 -	16,000
Naval officers - -	5,000	4 -	20,000
Persons in lesser of- fices - - - }	5,000	6 -	30,000
Persons in higher offices - - - }	5,000	8 -	40,000
Lesser clergymen -	8,000	5 -	40,000
Lesser merchants -	8,000	6 -	48,000
Persons in the law -	10,000	7 -	70,000
Persons of the libe- ral arts - - - }	15,000	5 -	75,000
Freeholders of the better sort - - }	40,000	7 -	280,000
Shopkeepers and tradesmen - - }	50,000	4½ -	225,000
Artizans - - -	60,000	4 -	240,000
Freeholders of the lesser sort - - }	120,000	5½ -	660,000
Farmers - - -	150,000	5 -	750,000
Gipsies, thieves, } beggars, &c. - }	—	— -	30,000
Common soldiers -	35,000	2 -	70,000
Common sailors -	50,000	3 -	150,000
Labourers and out- servants - - }	364,000	3½ -	1,274,000
Cottagers and pau- pers - - - }	400,000	3¼ -	1,300,000
			<hr/> 5,499,520 <hr/>



If this division of the people should be deemed only probable, it would prove, with sufficient conviction, how many dwellings the two last classes required to shelter them, since they contained no fewer than *two million five hundred and seventy-four thousand persons*. Gregory King allotted for them, as we have seen, 550,000 houses. And it is apparent, that if the two lower orders of men have augmented, with the progress, which has been traced in our agriculture and manufactures, in our traffic and navigation, such persons must necessarily dwell in a greater number of houses.

Davenant has shewn, that the poor rates of England and Wales amounted, towards the end of Charles II.'s reign, to - - - - £. 665,302.

By an account given in to parliament, in 1776, the poor rates amounted to - - - - 1,556,804.

However this vast sum, which is probably under the truth, may have been misapplied, or wasted, yet every one, who received his proportion of it, as alms, was exempted from the tax on chargeable houses, and must have consequently swelled the number of cottagers.

Whatever the term *cottage* may have signified formerly, it was described, by the statute of the 20 Geo. II. as a house, having nine windows, or under, whose inhabitant either receives alms, or does not pay to church and poor. But, we are  
not

not inquiring about *the word*, but *the thing*; whether the *dwellings* of the lower orders, of whatever denomination, have increased, or diminished, since the Revolution; and *the end* of this inquiry is to find, whether the lower orders of men have decreased, or augmented.

The argument, for a decreased number of cottages, is this: Gregory King, from a view of the hearth-books of 1690, (which yet did not contain the cottages, since they were not chargeable with the hearth-tax,) calculated the dwellings of those, who either received alms, or did not give any, at - - - - - 550,000.

The surveyors of houses returned the

number of cottages, in 1759*, at -	282,429;
and in 1781 - -	284,459.

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Forster, the antagonist of Brackenridge, was the first, probably, who objected to the accuracy of the surveyors returns, with regard to *all* houses. Having obtained the *collectors rolls*, he had *counted*, in 1757, the number of houses in nine contiguous parishes; whereby he found that, out of 538 houses, only 177 paid the tax; that Lambourn

\* This is the first year, says Doctor Price, that an order was given to return the cottages excused for poverty. I have in my possession some returns which were made of cottages in 1757, and which, having escaped the destruction of time, evince previous orders and previous performance. There was, in fact, an account of the cottages made up at the tax-office in 1756.

parish,

parish, wherein there is a market-town, contains 445 houses, of which 229 only paid the tax. When it was objected to Forster, that this survey was too narrow for a general average, he added afterwards nine other parishes, in distant counties; whereby it appeared, that of 1,045 houses, only 347 were charged with the duty; whence he inferred, that the *cottages* were to the *taxable houses* as more than *two* to *one*\*. Mr. Wales equally objected to the truth of the surveyors returns, in their full extent. And Mr. Howlet endeavoured, with no small success, to calculate the average of their errors, in order to evince what ought probably to have been the true amount of the genuine numbers. In this calculation, Doctor Price hath doubtless shewn petty faults; yet is there sufficient reason to conclude, with Dr. Forster and Mr. Howlet, that the houses returned to the tax-office are to the whole, as 17 are to 29, nearly. It will at last be found, that the returns of taxable houses are very near the truth; but that the reports of exempted houses cannot possibly be true: for 280,000 or even 300,000 cottages, would not contain the two lower orders who existed in England and Wales at the Revolution; and

\* Forster's letter, in December 1760, which the Royal Society declined to publish. [MSS. Birch, Brit. Mus. No. 4440.] The algebraical sophisms of Brackenridge were printed in the foreign gazettes: the true philosophy of Forster, by *experiment* and *fact*, was buried in the rubbish of the Royal Society.

who,

who, with the greatest aid of machinery, could not perform the annual labour of the same countries at present.

Our agriculture has at all times employed the greatest number of hands, because it forms the support of our manufactures, our traffic, and our navigation. It admits of little dispute, whether our husbandry has been pursued, before, or since the bounty on the export of corn, in 1689, with the greatest skill, diligence, and success. Mr. Arthur Young found, in 1770, by inquiries in the counties, and by calculations from minutes of sufficient accuracy, that the persons engaged in farming alone amounted to 2,800,000; besides a vast number of people, who are as much maintained by agriculture as the ploughman that tills the soil\*. Yet, the two lower ranks of Gregory King, including the labouring people and out-servants, the cottagers, paupers, and vagrants, amounted only to 2,600,000.

Of the general state of our manufactures, at the Revolution, and at present, no comparison can surely be made, as to the extensiveness of their annual value, or to the numerosity of useful people, who were employed by them. The woollen manufacture of Yorkshire alone is, in the present day, of equal extent with the woollen manufactures of England, at the Revolution. By an account, which had been formed at the aulnager's office, it

\* North. Tour, vol. iv. p. 364—5.



appears, that the woollen goods exported in 1688, were valued at two millions, exclusive of the home consumption, that amounted to a much less value\*. The manufacturers furnished the committee of privy council, who sat on the Irish arrangements, with “a particular estimate of the Yorkshire woollen manufactures;” whereby it appeared, that there were exported yearly of the value of £.2,371,942, and consumed at home £.901,759 †. We know, with sufficient certainty, from the custom-house books, that, after clothing the inhabitants, there were exported of the value of woollens, according to an average of the years 1699—1700—1, the value of - - - - - £.2,561,615; the average of 1769—70—71 - 4,323,463; the average of 1790—91—92 - 5,056,733.

And this manufacture, which has been always regarded as the greatest, continues to flourish, as we have just seen, and to employ, as it is said, a million and a half of people.

Since the epoch of the Revolution, we may be said to have gained the manufactures of silks, of linen, of cotton, of paper, of iron, and the potteries, with glass; besides other ingenious fabrics, which all employ a very numerous and useful race. We may indeed determine, with regard to the augmentation of our manufactures, and

\* MSS. Harl. Brit. Mus. N° 1898, for a minute account.

† The Council Report.

to the increase of our artizans, from the following detail :

There were exported, according to an average of the years 1699—1700—1701, products, *exclusive of the woollens before-mentioned*, of the value

of - - - - -	£. 3,863,810
Ditto in 1769—70—71 - - -	10,565,196
Ditto in 1790—91—92 - - -	* 10,744,092

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Thus, have we demonstration, that while our wool-  
len manufactories nearly doubled, in their extent,  
during seventy years, our other manufactures had  
almost trebled, in theirs: And, therefore, it is  
equally demonstrable, that the great body of artists,

\* Such is the exhilarating view, which the exported cargoes exhibit of our prosperity! The imports of the materials of manufacture will furnish a prospect equally pleasing.

#### OF SPANISH WOOL.

There were imported into England, according to	lbs.
a three-years average, ending with 1705 - -	1,020,903
D° - - - - - 1720 - -	606,313
D° - - - - - 1787 - -	2,622,101
D° - - - - - 1792 - -	3,161,914

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#### OF COTTON WOOL.

There were imported into England, according to	lbs.
a five-years average, ending with 1705 - -	1,170,881
D° - - - - - 1720 - -	2,173,287
D° - - - - - 1787 - -	16,466,312
D° - - - - - 1792 - -	29,620,281

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who were constantly employed, in all those manufactories, must have increased, nearly, in the same proportion, during the same busy period.

The whole sailors, who were found in England, by enumeration, in January 1700—1, amounted to - - - - - \*16,591

By a calculation, which agreed nearly with the accuracy of this enumeration, there appeared to have been annually employed in *the merchants service*, between the years 1764 and 1774, - 59,565  
In 1792, - - - - - 87,569

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The tonnage of English shipping, during King William's reign, amounted only to - - - - - 230,441 tons.  
D<sup>o</sup> during the present reign, - 1,186,610

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We may thence, certainly determine, with regard to the number of useful artificers, who must have been employed, during the latter period, more than in the former, in building and repairing our ships. It is husbandry, then, and manufactures, commerce, and navigation, which every where, in later ages, employ, and maintain, the great body of the people. Now, the labour demanded, during the present reign, to carry forward the national busi-

\* There is reason to believe, however, that the above enumeration did not contain the sailors of the port of London.

ness, agricultural and commercial, could not, by any possibility, have been performed, by the inferior numbers of the industrious classes, who doubtless existed, in the reign of King William. And from the foregoing reasonings, and facts, we may certainly conclude, with one of the ablest writers of any age, on political œconomy: "The liberal reward of labour, as it is the effect of increasing wealth, so it is the cause of increasing population: To complain of it [high wages] is to lament over the necessary effect and cause of the greatest public prosperity"\*. It is absurd, then, to argue, that as employments increase, population diminishes; that as hands are wanted, fewer hands should be found; and that as greater comforts are conferred on mankind, the natural propensity of man to multiply, and to people the earth, should become less powerful, in its genial energies.

In calculating the numbers of people, we must attentively consider the state of society, in which they exist; whether as fishers and hunters, as shepherds and husbandmen, as manufacturers and traders; or as in a mixed condition, composed partly of each denomination. The American tribes, who represent the first, are found to be inconsiderable in numbers; because they do not easily procure

\* See the Inquiry into the Causes of the Wealth of Nations, ch. 8; wherein Dr. Adam Smith treats *Of the Wages of Labour*, and incidentally of population, with a perspicuity, an elegance, and a force, which have been seldom equalled.



subsistence from their vast lakes, and unbounded forests, by fishing, and hunting. The Asiatic Tartars, who represent the second stage of society, are much more populous; since they derive continual plenty from their multitudinous flocks. But, even these are, by no means, equal in population to the Chinese, who acquire their comforts from an unremitting industry, which they employ in agriculture, in manufacture, in the arts, in fisheries, though not in navigation. It was foreign commerce, which peopled the marshes of the Adriatic, and the Baltic, during the middle ages; hence arose Venice, and the Hanse towns, with their envied opulence, and naval power. It was the conjunction of agriculture, manufactures, and traffic, which filled *the Low Countries* with populous towns, with unexampled wealth, and with marvellous energy. The same causes, that produced all those effects, which history records, as to industry, riches, and strength, continue to produce similar effects, at present.

When England was a country of shepherds, and warriors, we have beheld her inconsiderable in numbers. When manufacturers found their way into the country, when husbandmen gradually acquired greater skill, and when the spirit of commerce at length actuated all; people, we have seen, grow out of the earth, amidst convulsions, famine, and warfare. He who compares the population of England and Wales, at the conquest, at the demise of Edward III. at the year 1588, with our  
8  
popula-

population in 1688, must trace a vast progress, in the intervenient centuries. But, England can scarcely be regarded as a manufacturing, and commercial, country, at the Revolution, when contrasted with her present prosperity, in manufacture, and trade. The theorist, then, who insists, that our numbers have thinned, as our employments have increased, and our population declined, as our agriculture and manufactures, our commerce and navigation, advanced, argues against facts, opposes experience, and shuts his eyes against daily observation.

Yet, Doctor Price, and his followers, contend, that our industrious classes have dwindled the most, since 1749, because it is from this epoch, that the prosperity of the people has been the greatest, however they may have, at any time, been governed. And the following argument is said to amount to demonstration, because *it contains as strong a proof of progressive depopulation as actual surveys can give*\*: The number of houses returned to the tax-office, as *charged* and *chargeable*,

was, - - - - -	in 1750 —	729,048
	in 1756 —	715,702
	in 1759 —	704,053
	in 1761 —	704,543
	in 1777 —	701,473

For a moment, Doctor Price would not listen to the suggestion, that the houses may

\* Dr. Price's Essay on Popul. p. 38.

have *existed*, though they were not *included*, in the returns of the intermediate years. But, lo! additional returns have been made up at the tax-office, amount-

ing, - - - - - in 1781 to 721,351.  
in 1794 to 1,008,222.

This detail is sufficient to show, that the Doctor has failed in the proof, which was to outargue facts, to overthrow experience, and to convert the improbable into certainty.

As a supplemental proof\*, which may give

\* The chargeable houses,

in 1781, *under* 10 windows, were — 497,801

*under* 21 windows, — — 171,177

*above* 20 windows, — — 52,373

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721,351

Cottages — — — 284,459

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Total houses, and cottages, in 1781, - 1,005,810

The houses in 1750 — 729,048

The cottages in 1756 — 274,755

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1,003,803

Increase since 1750 — — 2,007

The account of cottages, in 1756, was completed, as appears from the tax-office books, on the 20th of November 1756. And thus, by adopting the mode, and the materials, of Doctor Price's argument, it is shewn, that he has been extremely mistaken, as to the depopulation of England, since 1750.

satis

satisfaction to well-meaning minds, there is annexed a *comparative view of the number of houses, in each county, as they appeared to King, and to Davenant, in the hearth-books of 1690; of the charged houses in 1708; of the chargeable houses in 1750; with the houses of the same description, in 1781.* To this interesting document, is now added the number of houses, which were found in England, and Wales, by the enumeration of 1801:—This enumeration will be found to throw great light upon the *comparative view* of those various statements, which exhibit the numbers of houses, at those several epochs, in a mutilated state. This document has, at length, decided the question, which has been so often asked, whether the numbers of our houses have increased, or diminished, since the Revolution, in 1688. I had previously estimated the number of houses in England, and Wales, at 1,586,000, during 1781: the enumeration of 1801 has found them to amount to 1,632,401, inhabited, and uninhabited houses.



A COMPARATIVE VIEW of the Number of Houses, in each County of England and Wales, as they appeared in the Hearth-books of Lady-day 1690; as they were made up at the Tax-office, in 1708—1750—1781; and, as they appear from the enumeration of 1801.

COUNTIES.	No of Houses,	No of Houses	No of Houses,	No of Houses,	No of Houses,	
	1690.	charged, 1708.	charged and chargeable, 1750.	charged and chargeable, 1781.	enumerated, 1801.	
					Inhabited.	Uninhabited
Bedfordshire	12,170	5,479	6,802	5,360	11,888	185
Berks	16,996	7,558	9,762	8,277	20,573	622
Bucks	18,688	8,604	10,687	8,670	20,443	543
Cambridge	18,629	7,220	9,334	9,088	16,139	312
Chester	25,592	11,656	16,006	17,201	34,482	1,139
Cornwall	26,613	9,052	14,520	15,274	32,906	1,472
Cumberland	15,279	2,509	11,914	13,419	21,573	872
Derby	24,944	8,260	13,912	14,046	31,822	1,369
Devon	56,202	16,686	30,049	28,612	57,955	3,235
Dorset	17,859	4,133	11,711	11,132	21,437	825
Durham	53,345	6,298	10,475	12,418	27,195	1,171
York	121,052	44,779	70,816	76,224	168,439	6,418
Essex	40,545	16,250	19,037	18,389	38,371	1,027
Gloucester	34,476	13,285	16,251	14,950	46,457	1,715
Hereford	16,744	6,913	8,771	8,092	17,003	941
Hertford	17,488	7,447	9,251	8,628	17,681	491
Huntingdon	8,713	3,992	4,363	3,847	6,936	156
Kent	46,674	21,871	30,029	30,975	51,556	1,413
Lancashire	46,961	22,588	33,273	30,956	114,270	3,394
Leicester	20,448	8,584	12,957	12,545	25,992	742
Lincoln	45,019	17,571	24,939	24,591	41,395	1,094
London, &c.	111,215	47,031	71,977	74,704	112,912	5,171
Norfolk	56,579	12,097	20,697	20,056	47,617	1,523
Northampton	26,904	9,218	12,464	10,350	26,665	736
Northumberland	{ included in }					
	Durham	6,787	10,453	12,431	26,518	1,534
Nottingham	17,818	7,755	11,001	10,872	25,611	542
Oxford	19,627	8,502	10,362	8,698	20,599	594
Rutland	3,661	1,498	1,873	1,445	3,274	87
Salop	27,471	11,452	13,332	12,895	31,182	929
Somerset	45,900	19,043	27,822	26,407	48,040	2,136
Southampton, &c.	28,557	14,331	18,045	15,828	38,284	906
Stafford	26,278	10,812	15,917	16,483	45,521	2,003
Suffolk	47,537	15,301	18,834	19,589	32,253	552
Surrey, &c.	40,610	14,071	20,037	19,381	46,072	1,514
Suffex	23,451	9,429	11,170	10,574	25,060	718
Warwick	22,400	9,461	12,759	13,276	41,069	2,946
Westmoreland	6,691	1,904	4,937	6,144	7,897	315
Wilts	27,418	11,373	14,303	12,856	28,059	1,170
Worcester	24,440	9,178	9,967	8,791	26,711	1,109
Anglesea	-	1,040	1,334	2,264	6,679	127
Brecon	-	3,370	3,234	3,407	6,315	479
Cardigan	-	2,042	2,542	2,444	8,819	221
Cardmarthen	-	3,985	5,020	5,126	13,449	371
Carnarvon	-	1,583	2,366	2,675	8,348	129
Denbigh	-	4,753	6,091	5,678	12,621	427
Flint	-	2,653	3,520	2,990	7,585	194
Glamorgan	-	5,020	6,290	5,146	14,225	537
Merioneth	-	1,900	2,664	2,972	5,787	193
Monmouth	-	3,289	4,980	4,454	8,948	417
Montgomery	-	4,047	4,890	5,421	8,725	223
Pembroke	-	2,764	2,803	3,224	11,869	398
Radnor	-	2,092	2,425	2,076	3,675	212
	7,921					
	1,319,215	508,516	729,048	721,351	1,574,902	57,529

From this instructive document, then, it appears, that the number of houses have increased, from 1690 A. D. to 1801, no fewer than 313,516 dwellings. And, thus, has demonstration decided, for ever, this pertinacious controversy, about the increase, or the diminution, of the people, since the great epoch of the Revolution\*. It has decided, also, another litigated point, whether the returns of the houses to the tax office “furnish as strong a proof, “as actual surveys can give.” This dogma is now involved in the external disgrace of that assuming argument, which was to outargue facts, and to overthrow experience. From the *comparative view* before stated, it clearly appears, that *twenty* counties, including London, Westminster, and Middlesex, have actually increased, since 1750. Let us take the example of Surrey, and Lancashire, which are stated, as having decreased in houses, and consequently, in people, since 1750†. It is apparent, that Surrey has been overflowed by London, during the last fifty years‡. And of Lancashire, considering the vast augmentations of its domestic manufactures, and foreign trade, it is not too much to

\* See much more satisfactory proofs of the vast increase of the population of Great Britain, since the Revolution, in “Observations on the Results of the Population Act, 41 Geo. III.”

† The country commissioners often discharge, on appeal, houses, as not properly chargeable. This may occasion an apparent decrease.

‡ In the *villages round London*, there were baptized, during a period of twenty years, beginning with the Revolution - - 20,782  
During 20 years, beginning with 1758—60, or 61 - 39,383

assert,

assert, that it must have added to its houses, and people, one-fourth, since 1750\*.

But, it is said to be idle, and impertinent, to argue from the state of population in Yorkshire, or in Lancashire, since Dr. Price is ready to admit, *that*

* In sixteen parishes in Lancashire, exclusive of Manchester and Liverpool, there were baptized, in twenty years, about the Revolution					
-	-	-	-	-	18,389
Ditto, from 1758					
-	-	-	-	-	47,919

These proofs of a rapid increase of natural population are from Mr. Howlet's excellent Examination. It is an acknowledged fact, that Liverpool has doubled its inhabitants every five-and-twenty years, since the year 1700.

Of houses, Liverpool contained in	—	1753	—	3,700
in	—	1773	—	5,928
in	—	1783	—	6,819
in	—	1788	—	7,690

Yet, were its houses returned to the tax-office,

in	—	1777	at	3,974
and in	—	1784	at	4,489

Manchester with Salford have equally increased.

Of houses, there were in both, in	—	1773	—	4,268
in	—	1783	—	6,178

Of which there were returned to the tax-office,

in 1777	—	—	2,519
in 1784	—	—	3,665

And it might be easily shewn, that the smaller towns, and villages, of Lancashire, have grown nearly in the same proportion; and this most prosperous county has, during the last 90 years, increased in the numbers of people with the boasted rapidity of the American States. Boston (in New England) was settled in 1633; yet, it did not contain twenty thousand inhabitants in 1775. Philadelphia was planted in 1682; yet, in its

*that these have added many to their numbers* \*. Yet, owing to what *moral cause* is it, that York and Lancashire, Chester and Derby, have acquired so many people? Is it owing to their manufactories, and traffic, and navigation, which augmented employments? Now, the same causes have produced the same effects, in the other counties of this fortunate island, in proportion as those causes have prevailed in each place.

It is pretended, however, that the astonishing augmentation of our cities did not arise from births, amidst prosperity, and happiness, since many people were brought from other districts, by the allurements of gain. The additional labourers could not assuredly have come, in considerable numbers, from those counties, which have sustained no diminution of people themselves; and in no European country is there less migration, from one parish to another, than in England. The principle of the poor laws checks population, by preventing the laborious poor, from looking for better employment, beyond the limits of their native parishes. Every one knows with what tyrannic rigour *the law of settlements* is enforced, by sending to their proper parishes the adventurous persons, who had found no employment at home. It is not, therefore, the migration of the adult from the country to the town, its happiest days, it did not comprehend thirty thousand souls. The other towns of the American States, being much inferior to these, can still less be compared to the manufacturing villages of England, or to Paisley, in Scotland, in the quickness of their growth.

\* Uncertainty of Population, p. 14—19.

that



that continually swells the amount of the busy multitudes, which are seen to swarm, where the spirit of diligence animates the people: and it is the employment, and habits of industry, which are given to children, in manufacturing towns, that add to the aggregate of dwellers in them, more than the arrival of strangers.

Having, in the foregoing manner, traced a gradual progress from *The Conquest* to *The Revolution*; having thus established, by the best proofs, which such an enquiry, without enumerations, admits, that the former current of population not only continued to run, but acquired a rapidity, and a fulness, as it flowed; we shall not find it difficult, since the chief objections are removed, to ascertain the probable amount of the present inhabitants. He who insists, that there were in England and Wales 1,300,000 inhabited houses in 1688, must equally allow, since it has been proved, that of these there were 711,000, which were inhabited by persons, who either received alms, or gave none; and it has been equally shewn, that the necessary labour of the present day could not, by any possible exertions, be performed by the lower orders, who certainly existed, in 1688. Hence, it is reasonable to conclude, that, since the 590,000 *chargeable* houses, in 1690, were accompanied with 710,000 *dwellings of the poor*, the 721,000 *chargeable* houses of 1781, must consequently be accompanied with 865,000 *dwellings of the poor*: For, such is the inference of just proportion. The distinct dwellings in England and Wales, when both classes are added together,

together, must be 1,586,000; which, if multiplied by  $5\frac{1}{3}$ , for the number of persons in each, would discover the whole numbers to be 8,447,200: But, there ought still to be an adequate allowance, for empty houses, and for other circumstances of diminution; which, after every deduction, would shew the present population of England and Wales to be rather more than eight million. From the enumeration of 1801, we certainly find, that the numbers now are 9,343,578. And such an augmentation, as this would evince, since the Revolution, is altogether consistent with reason, with facts, and with experience.

Mr. Wallace, the learned antagonist of Mr. Hume, very justly remarks \*, “that it is not owing to the want of prolific virtue, but, to the distressed circumstances of mankind, every generation do not more than double themselves; which would be the case, if every man were married at the age of puberty, and could provide for a family.” He plainly evinces, that there might have easily proceeded from the *created pair* 6,291,456 persons, in seven hundred years. From the foregoing discussions, we have seen an augmentation of four million and a half of people, during six centuries and a quarter, of tyranny, of war, and of pestilence. But, when we consider the more frequent employments, and agreeable comforts, of the people, their superior freedom, and greater healthfulness, we may assuredly conclude, that there has been an augmentation of 2,830,000 since *The Revolution*.

\* Dissert. on the Numbers of Mankind, p. 8.

Of this great increase of people, Ireland furnishes a remarkable example, though this kingdom has not always enjoyed, during the effluxion of the last century, a situation equally fortunate\*. Ireland has suffered, during this period, the miseries of civil war, which ended in the forfeiture, and expulsion of thousands. In this period, also, multitudes constantly emigrated, either to exercise their industry, or to draw the sword, in foreign climes. Yet, are there abundant reasons to believe, that this prolific island has much more than trebled its inhabitants, in the last hundred years.

Sir William Petty, who possessed very minute details, with regard to the condition of Ireland, in the period, from the Restoration to the Revolution, stated the number of houses, in 1672 †, at 200,020. The number returned by the tax-gatherers,

in 1791 ‡, was - - - - - 701,102

\* Though the hearth-books of England have sunk into oblivion, the hearth-books of Ireland remain. From the produce of the hearth-tax may be traced its gradual rise, as in the subjoined detail, which evinces the progress of population. It yielded, according to a five years average, ending

with	—	—	—	1687	—	£ 32,416
Three years average, with				1732	—	42,456
D <sup>o</sup>	—	—	with	1762	—	55,189
Seven years	—	d <sup>o</sup>	—	1777	—	59,869
Five years	—	d <sup>o</sup>	—	1781	—	60,648
			In	1781	—	<u>63,820</u>

See Bibl. Harl. Brit. Mus. N<sup>o</sup> 4706—Mr. A. Young's Tour in Ireland, the Appendix—and Mr. Howlet's Essay on the Population of Ireland, p. 19. † Pol. Anatomy, p. 7-11-17-116.

‡ See the account of houses given in to the Irish Parliament, on the 22d March 1792.

At

At the first epoch, the Irish nation had scarcely recovered from a long and destructive civil war. It is sufficiently known, that, notwithstanding the laudable efforts of the late Mr. Bushe, there are several houses omitted, which often happens, when interest may be promoted by concealment. Sir William Petty stated the whole population of Ireland, in 1672, at - - - - - 1,100,000 souls.

Were we to multiply 701,102 }  
houses of the year 1791, at 6 } 4,206,612 do.  
in each\*, this would carry the }  
number up to - - - - - }

\* Mr. Bushe had obtained actual enumerations of the number of dwellers, in each house, throughout many places of Ireland, exclusive of Dublin, amounting to 87,895 souls, in 14,108 houses, or nearly  $6\frac{1}{4}$  in each dwelling. But, Mr. Bushe went a step farther towards certainty, by getting the numbers, which dwelt in each kind of house: The houses of paupers had  $5\frac{1}{5}$  in each; in new houses were  $4\frac{1}{4}$ ; in houses with two hearths were 9; and in houses with one hearth were  $6\frac{1}{2}$  in each. Mr. Bushe, however, considered these numbers, as higher than the general average. And, from all these data, I have formed the following TABLE of the POPULATION of Ireland, in 1791; shewing the number of each kind of persons, in that most populous kingdom:

483,990	houses of <i>one</i> hearth, at 6 in each	—	2,903,940
67,663	houses of <i>two</i> , or more, hearths, at 8 in each	— — — —	541,304
15,025	houses, unascertained, whether of one hearth, or more,	— at $6\frac{1}{2}$ in each	97,662
21,868	new houses	— at 4 in each	87,472
112,556	paupers' houses	— at 5 in each	562,780
<hr/> 701,102 houses, containing of all kind of persons			<hr/> 4,193,158 <hr/>

Were



Were we to admit this account, which has indeed been doubted, as merely an approximation to truth, it would demonstrate a still more considerable increase of people, than, as we have so many reasons for believing, took place, during the last hundred years, in England, which enjoyed more productive advantages. This example ought to be more convincing than many arguments.

The same principles, which, in every age, influenced the population of England, and of Ireland, produced similar effects on the populousness of Scotland. When England, and Ireland, were poor, and depopulated, we may easily conjecture, that Scotland could not have been very opulent, or populous. As England, and Ireland, gradually acquired inhabitants, we may presume Scotland followed their paths, though at a great distance behind. And, the accounts, which the ministers of the several parishes have lately transmitted to Sir John Sinclair, from enumerations, prove, that the people of Scotland have greatly increased, during the last eight-and-thirty years\*. An intelligent observer might form a satisfactory judgment of

\* The numbers of inhabitants, which the ministers of the several parishes, in Scotland, have returned to Sir J. Sinclair, amount to 1,526,492: whereby it appears, that there has been an augmentation of 261,112, souls on 1,265,380, which were the numbers, about the year 1755. The enumeration of 1801 evinces, that there were, then, in Scotland, about 1,600,000 souls. And thus, this litigated question seems to be decided, as to Scotland, from actual enumerations.

the previous condition of England, and Scotland, from the accurate statements, whereon their union was formed.

The public revenue of England was £. 5,691,803  
of Scotland, - - 160,000

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Of the trade of both, we may determine from the custom-house duties, which,  
in England, were - - - - £. 1,341,559  
in Scotland, - - - - - 34,000

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The gross income of the posts was,  
in England, - - - - - £. 101,101  
in Scotland, - - - - - 1,194

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Of the circulation of both, we may form an opinion from the re-coinage of both. There were re-coined,  
in England, during King William's reign, - - - - - £. 8,000,000  
in Scotland, soon after the Union, 411,118

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We may decide, with regard to the consumption of both, from the excise duties; which,  
in England, amounted to - - £. 947,602  
in Scotland, to - - - - 33,500

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From those details, \* it is reasonable to infer, that Scotland possessed, in those days, no flourishing husbandry, few manufactories, little commerce, and less circulation, though there had certainly been a considerable advance, in all these, during the two preceding centuries. "Numbers of people, the "greatest riches of other nations," said Mr. Law†, in 1705, "are a burden to us; the land is not "improved; the product is not manufactured; "the fishing, and other advantages of foreign trade, "are neglected." Such was the deplorable state of Scotland, at the epoch of her happy union with England!

The Scots were, for years, too much engaged in religious, and political, controversy, to derive from that fortunate event, all the advantages which, at length, have undoubtedly flowed from it. Their misfortunes, arising chiefly from those evils, have, however, conferred on them the most invigorating benefits. The laws, that a wise policy enacted, created greater personal independence, and established better safeguards for property, which have produced the usual effects of a more animating industry. Of the intermediate improvements of their tillage, we may form some judgment from the rise of rents, and the advance of the purchase-money for land, which must have necessarily proceeded from a

\* See the elaborate and very curious History of the Union, by De Foe, republished by Stockdale; and Ruddiman's preface to Anderfon's Diplomata.

† Considerations on Money and Trade.

better husbandry, or a greater opulence. The manufactories, which the Scots doubtless possessed, in 1707, though to no considerable extent, have not only been greatly enlarged \*; but to the old; new ones have meanwhile been added: The value of their whole exports by sea, amounted, at the epoch of the Union, if we may believe Mr. Law, to about £. 300,000: The whole of these exports were carried up, before the colony war began, to £. 1,800,000, if we may credit the custom-house books: The tonnage of shipping, which annually entered the ports of Scotland, at the first æra, was only 10,000 †; but, at the last, 93,000 tons: The foregoing statements, general as they are, will evince to every intelligent mind, how much the commerce, and navigation, of Scotland have increased, since the hearts, and hands, of the two kingdoms were fortunately joined together, and how many useful people she has added to her original numbers.

Of the traffic of Scotland, it ought to be however remarked,

\* The quantity of linen made for Sale, in Scotland, during 1728, was only 2,000,000 yards; but, in 1775, 12,000,000. The linen is the chief manufacture of Scotland; and, were we to regard this as a proper representative of the whole, we might from this infer a very considerable augmentation in every other manufacture.

† In the Harl. MSS. No. 6209, Brit. Mus. there is a list of the ships belonging to Scotland, (as they were entered in the Register Général kept at London) and trading in the ports



remarked, that it is more easily driven from its course, than the English, either by internal misfortunes, or by foreign warfare; because it is less firmly established; it is supported by smaller capitals; and it is less extensive, in its range. The bankruptcies of 1772 deducted nearly £. 300,000 from the annual exports of Scotland. The commercial events indeed of our two last wars would alone justify this remark. Let us compare, then, the exports of Scotland, when they were the lowest, during the war of 1756, with the lowest exports of the colony-war, and the highest exports of the first, with the highest of the second; because we shall thereby see the depressions, and elevations, of both:

of that kingdom, from Christmas 1707, to Christmas 1712, distinguishing those belonging to Scotland, prior to the Union, as follows:

				Vessels.	Tons,
Total,	—	—	—	1,123 —	50,232 <sup>1</sup>
Prior to the Union,	—	—	—	215 —	14,485
				<hr/>	<hr/>
	Increase	—	—	908 —	35,747 <sup>1</sup>
There belonged to Scotland, in 1792, of					
vessels, which entered only once,			—	2,116 —	154,857 <sup>1</sup>
				<hr/>	<hr/>
Of which were employed, in 1792, in					
Foreign trade,	—	—	—	718 —	84,027 <sup>1</sup>
Coast trade,	—	—	—	1,022 —	50,940
Fishing shallops, &c.	—	—	—	376 —	19,890
				<hr/>	<hr/>
The Total,	—	—	—	2,116 —	154,857 <sup>1</sup>
				<hr/>	<hr/>

Those comparative statements evince, undoubtedly, a very considerable increase of shipping in the intermediate period.

The

## The Value of Exports,

in 1755	— £.535,577	—	in 1782	— £.653,709
in 1756	— 628,049	—	in 1778	— 702,820
in 1757	— 828,577	—	in 1781	— 763,809
				<hr/>
in 1760	— 1,086,205	—	in 1776	— 1,025,973
in 1761	— 1,165,722	—	in 1777	— 837,643
in 1762	— 998,165	—	in 1780	— 1,002,039

When we recollect, that Great Britain was engaged, during the war with her colonies, which occupied so much of the foreign trade of Scotland, with France, with Spain, and with Holland, we ought not to be surpris'd, that so much should be lost, as that so much should remain, at the end of eight years hostilities. It was deranged, but it was not ruined, as had been predicted, in 1774. And, when the various pressures of this most distressful war were removed, though with a tardy hand, it began to rise; yet not with the elasticity of 1763; because the colony commerce, which furnished so many of the exports of Scotland, had been turned into other channels. But, the following detail will enable us to form a more accurate judgment, with regard to this interesting subject:

## The Value of Exports from Scotland,

in 1762	— £.998,165	—	in 1782	— £.653,709
in 1763	— 1,091,536	—	in 1783	— 829,824
in 1764	— 1,234,927	—	in 1784	— 929,900
in 1765	— 1,180,867	—	in 1785	— 1,007,635

It ought, however, to be remembered, that in the first period, complete peace was established in 1763; but, in the last, it was not fully restored till the middle of 1784. Yet, the shipping of Scotland will be found, as we have already perceived the ships to be in England, our most infallible guides; because, the entries of ships are more accurately taken than the value of cargoes, and trade can scarcely be said to decline, while our vessels increase. Let us attend, then, to the following detail of ships, which entered in the ports of Scotland, during the following years, both before, and after, the late war:

	Foreign Trade.	Coast Trade.	Fishing, &c.
in 1769	— 48,271 tons.	21,615 tons.	10,275 tons.
in 1774	— 52,225 —	26,214 —	14,903
in 1784	— 50,386 —	31,542 —	10,421
in 1785	— 60,356 —	36,371 —	11,252

\* The custom-house account, from which the above detail is taken, states the ships *to belong to Scotland, accounting each vessel only one voyage in every year.* This comparative estimate of the shipping, which were employed in the foreign, or over-sea, trade of Scotland, may be carried back to the peace of 1763. Thus, there were employed, in *foreign voyages*,

in 1759	— 22,902 tons.	—	in 1761	— 31,411 tons.
in 1763	— 33,352	—	in 1764	— 41,076
in 1782	— 50,530	—	in 1792	— 84,027
			in 1802	— 94,276

Whence, we may undoubtedly conclude, that Scotland possesses a much greater navigation at present, than at the peace of 1763, or at any prior epoch.

so that of 1774, it was equally superior to that of 1769, as that of 1785 was to that of 1774: That the coast trade was much greater, in 1785, than ever it had been, in any prior year. And, that the fishing business of 1785 was more extensive than it had been in 1769, but much more confined than in 1774, if we may implicitly credit the custom-house books.

However the foreign trade of Scotland may have been depressed, by the colony-war, there is reason to believe, that she has thereby added to her domestic manufactures. The commercial capitals, which could no longer be employed abroad, were at length more usefully laid out at home. Instead of promoting the labour of other countries, these capitals furnished employment to many hands, within the kingdom. And, Scotland has, by these means, extended her valuable manufacture of gauzes; she has augmented the number of her print-fields; she has acquired every branch of the cotton business; and she has greatly increased her linens\*. Thus it is, that an active people may be

\* Of Linens there were made for Sale;

in 1772 -	13,089,006 yards.	—	in 1782 -	15,348,744 yards.
1773 -	10,748,110	—	1783 -	17,074,777
1774 -	11,422,115	—	1784 -	19,138,593
			1792 -	21,065,386

The greater number of shipping, which are at present employed, than before the war, in the coast-trade of Scotland, seems also to evince an augmentation of domestic commerce.

This comfortable truth is also proved by the increase of the



be even enriched, by throwing obstructions, in the way of their foreign commerce. And, if productive labour constitute genuine wealth, the Scots may be regarded, at present, as a nation more industrious, opulent, and populous, than they were before the colony-war began, and much more than at the epoch of the Union.

These observations apply equally to England. Every occurrence, which at any time turned additional capitals into domestic employments, necessarily contributed to improve the agriculture, to augment the manufactures, to increase the wealth, and to add to the population of the country, by yielding a greater quantity of productive labour. Ireland, we have clearly seen, add millions to her numbers, in the short period of little more than a century, amidst civil war, and frequent emigrations. Scotland, we have also beheld, add greatly to her effective population, in the effluxion of forty years. And, England, like every other civilized country, must, of consequence, have made many additions to her populousness, during the busy course of the last hundred years. An argument was brought forward, with the parade of confidence, to prove a contrary position. But, after a fair examination, this argument, if it merits that dignified name, has

export by sea of Scotch manufactures; of which there were thus exported, according to a three-years average, ending with 1774, the value of	—	—	—	—	£. 478,347
Ditto, with 1792	—	—	—	—	888,425
in 1802	—	—	—	—	2,023,069

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been

been found to have, at least, the pertinacity of factiousness, if it have not the frivolousness of folly. Let all, then, who, like true philosophers, reason from facts, and deduce from experience,

“Leave such to trifle with more grace, and ease,

“Whom *folly* pleases, or whose *fallies* please.”

## CHAP. XII.

*A Review of the foregoing Documents proposed.—A supplemental Proof from a Chronological Table of Commerce.—A Commentary thereon.—The successive Epochs from 1660 to 1793.—The Tonnage of Shipping.—The value of exported Cargoes.—The Balance of Trade.—The nett Customs.—The Amount of the Coinage in that long Period.—The Conclusion of this Review, which reflects a flattering Prospect of our future Prosperity.*

A REVIEW of the several documents, which are contained, in the foregoing Estimate, would greatly illustrate the interesting subject of the prosperity, and populousness, of Great Britain. As a supplemental proof, I have annexed a *Chronological Account of Commerce*, in this island, from the Restoration to the year 1803, with design to exhibit a more connected view of the weakness of its commencement, the struggles of its progression, and the greatness of its maturity, than has yet been done. This *Chronological Table* will speak to the eye, while it convinces the understanding, and comforts the heart. And, the commentary on the various heads of this *Table* will furnish opportunities, which did not occur before, of treating of many topics that, as they confirm the doubtful, and illustrate the dark, will throw a very pleasant light on our future prosperity, by taking a short retrospect of the past.

A C H R O-

Of the Chronological Table, the eye instantly perceives the disposition of the parts, and the intellect fully comprehends the arrangement of the whole. In the first column may be seen the successive epochs, beginning with the Restoration, whence certainty may be said to commence, and ending with the year 1802. The second column gives the tonnage of the shipping, which successively sailed from England, distinguishing the English from the foreign, in order to find, in the amount of each, the salutary effects of the act of navigation. The third column contains the value of the merchandize, which were from year to year sent out, that the extent of the cargoes may be compared with the quantity of tonnage, which carried them; and, though the Scotch tonnage could not be adjoined, the value of the Scotch exports is added, because every one finds a gratification, in extending his views. The fourth column exhibits the result of our exports and imports compared, which forms what has been denominated the balance of trade. The fifth column states the nett customs, which our foreign commerce has yielded, at different periods, because, while the detail gratifies curiosity, it furnishes no inconsiderable proof of the prosperity, or decline, of our traffic. And the last column contains, what may be regarded, as the result of the whole, the sums, which have been coined in England, during every reign, from the Restoration to the 25th of March



March 1803; because the *mint*, as Sir Robert Cotton expresses it, *is the pulse of the commonwealth*.

That the progress of our traffic, and navigation, from the commencement of the seventeenth century, to the æra of the Restoration, had been remarkably rapid, all mercantile writers seem to admit. The navigation act contributed greatly to carry this advance up to the Revolution. Sir William Petty stated, in 1670, "that the shipping of England had trebled in forty years." Doctor Davenant afterwards asserted\*, "that experienced merchants did agree, that we had, in 1688, near double the tonnage of trading shipping to what we had in 1666." And Anderson† inferred, from the concurring testimony of authors on this interesting subject, "that the English nation was in the zenith of commercial prosperity at the Revolution." We have already examined how much the commercial gain of our traders was taken away by the war, which immediately followed that most important event in our annals. But, the eye must be again thrown over the chronological table, if the reader wish for a more comprehensive view of the continual progress of navigation, from the station of eminence, to which Anderson had traced it; its temporary interruptions; and, notwithstanding the independence of the American states, its final exaltation, in the year 1802.

\* Vol. ii. p. 29.

† Chron. Commerce, vol. ii. p. 187.

If we compare the greatness of 1688, with the amount of 1774, 1784, 1792, and 1802, we shall discover, that the navigation of the latter epochs had reached a point of the mercantile heavens, so much more exalted than the former, as to reverse its position; as to convert what was once *the zenith* into *the nadir* now.

	Tons English.	Do foreign.	Total.
Contrast 1688 -	190,533 -	95,267 -	285,800
with 1774 -	798,240 -	65,273 -	863,513
with 1784 -	846,355 -	113,064 -	959,419
with 1792 -	1,396,003 -	169,151 -	1,565,154

\*The famous Mr. Gregory King calculated\*, "*that we gained annually on the freight of English shipping, in 1688,* — — — *£. 810,000.*"

If the "*national profit on the naval trade of England, in 1688,*" amounted to £. 810,000, what ought to have been *the national profit on our naval trade, in 1774?* If 190,000 tons gained £. 810,000, 790,000 tons must have gained — £. 3,367,889.

940,000 tons, including the Scots ships, must also have gained, in 1784, — — — £. 4,060,000.

And, 1,561,158 tons, including the Scots, must have gained, in 1792, £. 6,665,463.

\* Dav. Works, vol. iv. p. 146.

This is, doubtless, a vast sum to be annually gained from our outward freights; but, great as it appears, in a mere mercantile light, when as large a sum is added to it, for our inward freights, the immense navigation, from whence it arises, must be considered as still more advantageous to the state, being a never-failing source, from which seamen, and transports, may be constantly drawn for the uses of war. If from the tonnage, which may be most safely followed, in discovering the benefits of our navigation, and commerce, during every age, we look into the *column of cargoes*, in the Chronological Table, we shall find an excellent auxiliary, in the ledger of the inspector-general, for conducting our inquiries, and forming our judgments.

To investigate the value of our exports, and of our imports, during the disturbed times of our Edwards, and Henries, or even in the more tranquil days of Elizabeth, would be a research of curiosity, rather than of use. On a subject of such difficult discussion, as no sufficient data had yet been established, the most judicious calculators could only speak in terms indefinite, and therefore unsatisfactory: yet Sir William Petty, Sir Josiah Child, Dr. Davenant, and Mr. Locke, all agreed in asserting, that our commerce flourished extremely from 1666 to 1688, when it had increased beyond all former example; and when its general growth, in the opinion of the most experienced merchants, was double, in its magnitude, at the Revolution, to  
its

its usual extent at the Restoration. In the Chronological Table, the value of exported commodities was adjusted for both those periods, by a standard, which seems to be thus admitted as just, by the wisest men in England.

During that day of commercial darkness, the experienced Sir Philip Meadows, whose presence for so many years did honour to the Board of Trade, sat down to form "*a general estimate of the trade of England*," from the amount of the duties, which were paid, at the custom-house, on our importations, and on our exports. Directed by his native sagacity, he produced a statement of our commerce, on an average of the three years of war 1694—95—96; which appears now, from a comparison with the entries in the ledger of the inspector-general, to have been wonderfully exact.

The value of exports\*, according to

Sir Philip's calculation,	-	-	£. 3,124,000
D°, according to the ledger, from Michaelmas 1696 to D° 1697	-	-	3,525,907.

\* But Sir P. Meadows excluded from his calculation the value of butter, cheese, candles, beef, pork, and other provisions exported to the Plantations, and the value of their products imported into England, which were afterwards consumed; "being in the nature of our coast-trade among our own people." Had he included these, his statement had been still nearer in its amount to the ledger of the inspector-general.



The value of imports, according to

him, - - - - -	- £. 3,050,000
D <sup>o</sup> , according to the ledger, - -	- <u>3,482,587</u>

The favourable balance of trade, ac-

cording to him, - - - - -	- £. 74,000
D <sup>o</sup> , according to the ledger, - -	- <u>43,341</u>

In the foregoing detail, from which we may ascertain, by comparison, nearly the truth, we behold the inconsiderable extent of the national commerce, at the peace of Ryswick, in 1697. *If, said that able statesman, the present condition of England be not satisfactory to the public, from the general account of it here mentioned, various ways may be followed to improve it: And his suggestions having been gradually adopted, in after times produced, at length, the wished-for effects of an active industry at home, and a prosperous navigation abroad. From that epoch, we have in the books of the inspector-general all the certainty, with regard to the annual amount of our exports, and our imports, which the nature of such complicated transactions easily admit. But, should the nation wish for more satisfactory evidence, on a subject so interesting, because it involves in it the welfare of the state, the same motion, which was made in the House of Commons by Mr. Lownds\*, during*

\* "In order to prevent this mischief [of exaggerated entries] says Davenant, a clause was offered, and very much insisted

during the reign of Queen Anne, to oblige the traders to make true entries of their cargoes, may be again proposed, and, if it can be freed from objection, carried into effect, by parliamentary regulations.

Meantime the tonnage of shipping, which transported the superfluous products of England, has been adjoined, in the foregoing table, to the value of cargoes, in order to supply any defect of proof, and to corroborate the certainty of each, by a fair comparison of both. When Sir Philip Meadows considered, with so much attention, our commercial affairs, he gave it, as his opinion, “that the advantage of trade cannot be computed by any general measure better than by that of the navigation.” It requires not, indeed, the grasp of Sir Philip’s mind to perceive, that the tonnage is naturally the evidence the most to be relied on, where there is any doubt: in this mode of proof there is no fiction: the entries are made at the Custom House, on the oath of the masters; though the tonnage was supposed to contain formerly about one-third less than the truth: but, the general average being once known, and admitted, we may argue from the apparent amount, with no more dread of deception, than we should expect from the notices of the most authentic record. In comparing the value of the cargoes with the ex-

insisted on by Mr. Lownds, but obstructed by the merchants, for ends not very justifiable, and the clause was not received.”  
Dav. vol. v. Whitworth’s edit. p. 443.

tent of the tonnage, as both are stated in the foregoing table, we ought to infer, that the first must always be superior in its risings, and depressions, to the last. It was with a view to that comparison, and this correspondence, that the bullion, whose annual exportation, for so many years, frightened the gravest politicians, was deducted from the value of the transported merchandize; since it occupied little room in the tonnage, yet swelled considerably the calculation of the general cargo: But the exported bullion was retained, in forming the balances of trade, because, though it cannot properly be considered as a manufacture, it ought nevertheless to be deemed a very valuable part of our actual wealth, which we send abroad in expectation of a profitable return.

Thus, we see, in the foregoing documents, *the best evidence*, with regard to our navigation, and our trade, *that the nature of the enquiry admits*. He who wishes to satisfy his doubts, or to gain information, by throwing his eye over the state of our exports, from 1696 to 1774, as it has been published by Sir Charles Whitworth, or the value of cargoes, which have been exported, during the present reign, as they have been arranged, in the foregoing table, must perceive, that when one year furnishes a great exportation, the next supplies the foreign markets with less; the third usually sends a cargo superior to the first; and the fourth gives often a smaller quantity than the last, the amount of which, however, is seldom below the level

level of the first. This striking variation arises chiefly from the irregularities of universal demand, since foreign fairs are sometimes empty, and sometimes full; and partly from the speculations, perhaps, the caprice, of traders. And, it has been shewn, from the most satisfactory proofs, that the year of profound peace, which immediately succeeds the conclusion of a lengthened war, always exhibits a great exportation, because every merchant makes haste to be rich: Thus, 1698, 1714, 1749, 1764, and 1785, form epochs of great relative traffic. But, it is from the averages of distant years, at given periods, that we can only form a decided opinion, with regard to the real prosperity, or decay, either of commerce, or of navigation: Thus, from the Restoration, to the Revolution, the foreign trade of England had doubled in its amount: from the peace of Ryswick to the demise of King William, it had nearly risen in the same proportion. During the first thirty years of the late century, it had again doubled: and from the year 1750 to 1774, notwithstanding the interruptions of an eight-years intervenient war, it appears to have gained more than one-fourth. We had *four* times more trade, and *five* times more shipping, in 1792, than the nation enjoyed, in 1702\*.

Though the late wars seem to have been levelled rather against the industry of the manufacturer, and the projects of the merchant, than

\* See the *chronological* Table, p. 234.



against the force of our fleets, or the power of our armies; though repeated blows of unusual severity were sometimes given to our navigation, and our traffic; yet our domestic diligence pursues with unabated ardour its usual occupations; the number of our shipping at present is great beyond example; and our trade, which was said to be almost undone, still rises superior to its losses, and bids defiance to prophecy. Let this consideration, comfort every lover of his country, since it is difficult to animate the despondent, and it is impossible to convince the incredulous.

If from those exhilarating topics, we turn to the column in the chronological table, which is occupied by the balance of trade, we shall find rather a more melancholy topic. No disquisition has engaged the pens of a more numerous class of writers, than that fruitful subject; who all complained of the difficulty of their labours, as they were each directed by feeble lights; and who warned their readers of the uncertainty of their conclusions, because their calculations had been formed on very disputable data.

In reviewing their performances, how amusing is it to observe, that though the sagacious Petty, and the experienced Child, the profound Temple, and the intelligent Davenant, had all taken it for granted, as a postulate, which could not be disputed, *that a balance of trade, either favourable, or disadvantageous, enriched, or impoverished, every commercial country*—a writer, as able as the ablest of them, should have at length appeared, who denied  
the

the truth of its existence, at least of its efficacy ! The late Mr. Hume seems to have written his fine *Essay on the Balance of Trade*, partly with design to throw a discredit on the declamations of Mr. Gee, "*which had struck the nation with an universal panic,*" perhaps more with the laudable purpose of convincing the public "*of the impossibility of our losing our money, by a wrong balance, as long as we preserve our people, and our industry.*"

Whatever wise men may determine, with regard to this curious, perhaps important, speculation, reason meanwhile asserts, what experience seems to confirm, "*that there is a certain quantity of bullion sent by one nation to another, to pay for what they have not been able to compensate by the barter of commodities, or by the remittance of bills of exchange ; which may be therefore deemed the balance of trade.*" And a writer on political œconomy, who is equal to Mr. Hume in reach of capacity, and superior to him in accuracy of argument, the late Sir James Stuart, has examined his reasonings, and overturned his system, which is elegant in its structure, but weak in its foundation. It behoves us, therefore, to look a little more narrowly into the state of the traffic, which Britain carries on with the world, in order to discover, if possible, how much bullion she pays to each of her commercial correspondents, or how much she receives from them.

Admitting that the apparent tide of payments flowed against this island, anterior to the Revolution, it does not seem easy to discover the exact

point of time, when it began to ebb, in a contrary direction.

Sir Philip Meadows, we have seen,	
found a balance in our favour, on	
an average of the business of 1694	
—5—6, of - - - - -	£. 74,000
The ledger of the inspector-general	
shewed a balance, on the traffic of	
1697, of - - - - -	43,341
The re-establishment of peace gave	
us a return, in 1698, of - - -	
	1,789,744
But, an increase of imports reduced	
the balance, in 1699, to - - -	
	1,080,497
And an augmentation of exports	
again raised the balance, in 1700,	
to - - - - -	1,332,541

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We now behold the dawn of knowledge, in respect to this interesting part of our œconomy, which has, at all times, been the most enveloped in darkness, and which sometimes introduced all the unpleasantness of uncertainty, and entailed too often the gloom of despondence. But, it ought to be remembered, that whether we import more than we export, is a mere question of fact, which depends on no one's opinion, since, like all other disputable facts, it may be proved by evidence.

We must recur once more to the ledger of the inspector-general of our foreign trade, as the best evidence, which the nature of the inquiry can furnish,

nish, or perhaps ought to be required. After admitting the force of every objection, that has been made against the entries at the custom-house, we may apply to that curious record of our traffic, what the Lord Chief Justice Hale \* asserted, with regard to the parish registers of births and burials, "*that it gives a greater demonstration than a hundred national arguments can either evince or confute.*" It was from that source of accurate information, that the balances were drawn, which are inserted in the foregoing chronological table; and it requires only "*a snatch of sight*" to perceive all the fluctuations of our mercantile dealings with the world, as they were directed by our activity, or our caprice, or remissness; and to decide, with regard to the extent of our gains, at every period, by the settlement of our grand account of profit, and loss, on every commercial adventure. One truth must be admitted, which has been considered by some, as a melancholy one, because they inferred from it, "*that we were driving a losing trade,*" that the apparent balance has been less favourable, in the present, than in the preceding reign. In order to account, for this unwelcome notice, it has been insisted that, as we grew more opulent, we became more luxurious, and, as our voluptuousness increased, our industry diminished, till, in the progress of our folly, we found a delight in sacrificing our diligence, and œconomy, to

\* Origination of Mankind, p. 207.



the gratifications of a pleasurable moment, during a dissipated age.

But, declamation is oftener used to conceal the bewitching errors of sophistry, than to investigate the instructive deductions of truth. Considering the balance of trade, as an interesting subject, to a commercial nation, it must be deemed not only of use, but of importance, to inquire minutely, which of our mercantile correspondents are our debtors, and which are our creditors; and to state, which country remits us a favourable balance, and to which we are obliged, in our turn, to pay one. Nor, is it satisfactory to contrast the general balances of different periods, in order to form general conclusions, which may be either just, or fallacious, as circumstances are attended to, or neglected. From a particular statement it will clearly appear, that we trade with the greater number of the nations of Europe on an advantageous ground; with few of them on an unfavourable one; that some states, as Italy, Turkey, and Venice, may be considered as of a doubtful kind, because they are not, in their balances, either constantly favourable, or unfavourable. To banish uncertainty from disquisition is always of importance. With this design, it is proposed to state an average of the balance of apparent payments, which were made, during the years 1771--2--3 to England, by each corresponding community, or which she made to them: and the averages of these years are taken, in order to discover the genuine balance of trade on the whole,

whole, since they seemed to be the least affected by the approaching storm, Where the scale of remittance vibrates in suspense, between the countries of doubtful payments, an average of six years is taken, deducting the adverse excesses of import, and of export, from each other.

Let us examine the following detail of our European commerce :

<i>Countries of favourable Balances.</i>			<i>Countries of unfavourable Balances.</i>		
Denmark and Norway	—	£ 78,478	East country [doubtful]	—	£.100,230
Flanders	—	780,088	Russia	—	822,607
France	—	190,605	Sweden	—	117,365
Germany	—	695,484	Turkey [doubtful]	—	120,497
Holland	—	1,464,149	Venice [doubtful]	—	11,369
Italy [doubtful]	—	43,289			
Portugal	} —	274,132			£.1,172,068
Madeira	} —	9,514			
Spain	} —	442,539	Favourable balance		3,636,504
Canaries	} —	23,347			
Streights	—	113,310			
Ireland	—	663,516			
Isle of Man	—	13,773			
Alderney	—	1,229			
Guernsey [doubtful]	—	6,269			
Jersey [doubtful]	—	8,850			
		<hr/>			<hr/>
		£.4,808,572			£.4,808,572
		<hr/>			<hr/>

Having thus fairly stated the countries of Europe, from which we receive yearly a balance on our trade, against those, to which we annually make unfavourable payments; and having found upon striking the difference, that we gained, at the commencement of the late war, a net balance of

of £.3,636,504, let us now inquire what we gained, or lost, by *our factories* in Africa, and in Asia.

Africa — —	£.656,599	East Indies —	£.1,105,511
Unfavourable balance	448,912		
	<u>£.1,105,511</u>		<u>£.1,105,511</u>

Having thus found an unfavourable balance on the traffic of our factories, of £.448,912, it is now time to examine the trade of our former, and present, colonies, which has too often been considered, as the only commerce worthy of our care; as if we had gained every thing, and lost nothing by it.

<i>Favourable Balances.</i>	
Newfoundland [doubtful]	£.29,484
Canada — —	187,974
Nova Scotia — —	14,434
New England — —	790,244
New York — —	343,992
Pennsylvania — —	521,900
Virginia and Maryland [doubtful]	165,230
Georgia [doubtful]	360
Florida — —	37,966
Bermudas — —	9,541
	<u>£.2,121,125</u>

£.2,121,125

<i>Unfavourable Balances.</i>	
Antigua — —	£.44,168
Barbadoes — —	44,969
Carolina [doubtful]	108,050
Hudson's Bay — —	2,501
Jamaica — —	753,770
Montferrat — —	46,623
Nevis — —	47,238
St. Christopher's — —	149,259
Grenades — —	288,962
Dominica — —	158,447
St. Vincent — —	104,238
Tobago — —	16,064
New Providence — —	2,094
Tortola — —	23,032
St. Croix — —	11,697
St. Eustatia — —	5,096
Spanish West Indies — —	35,352
Greenland — —	18,274
Balance — —	261,291

£.2,121,125

Let

Let us now recapitulate the foregoing balances :

Gained on our European commerce	—	—	—	£. 3,636,504
Deduct the loss on the trade of our factories	—	—	—	448,912
				<hr/>
				£. 3,187,596
Gained on the balance of our colony commerce	—	—	—	261,291
				<hr/>
Net balance gained on the trade of England	—	—	—	£. 3,448,887
Net balance gained on the trade of Scotland, according }				
to an average of 1771—2—3	—	—	—	435,957
				<hr/>
Net gain on the British commerce in 1771—2—3	—	—	—	£. 3,884,844
Ditto	—	—	—	in 1792 — 5,776,615
				<hr/> <hr/>

Of an extensive building, we vainly attempt to form an accurate judgment of the proportion of the parts, or the beauty of the whole, without measuring the size of the columns, and examining the congruity of the result, by the suitableness of every dimension. Of the British commerce, so luxuriant in its shoots, and so interwoven in its branches, it is equally impossible to discover the total, or relative, products, without calculating the gain, or loss, that ultimately results to the nation, from every market. Thus, in the foregoing statement, we perceive, which of our European customers pay us a balance, favourable and constant; which of them are sometimes our debtors, and at other times our creditors; which of them continually draw an unfavourable balance from us; and, by opposing the averages of the profits, and losses, of every annual adventure to each other, we at length discover, from the result, the vast amount of our gains. The mercantile transactions at our factories in Africa, and Asia, were stated  
against



against each other, because they seemed to be of a similar nature. But, whether we ought to consider the balance of £.448,912 as absolutely lost, must depend on the essential circumstance, whether we consume at home the merchandizes of the East, or by exporting them for the consumption of strangers, we draw back, with interest, what we had only advanced: should the nation prefer the beautiful manufactures of the Indian to her own, we ought to regard her prudence as on a level with the indiscretion of the milliner, who adorns her own person with the gaudy attire, which she had prepared, for the ornament of the great, and the gay. Our former colonies were stated against each other, in order to shew the relative advantage of each, as well as the real importance of the whole. Of the valuable products imported from them, which seem to form so great a balance against the nation, we ought to observe, that they are either gainful, or disadvantageous, as we apply them: we gain by the tobacco, the sugars, the spirits, the drugs, the dyeing-woods, which we re-export to our neighbours: we lose by what we unnecessarily waste.

The colony-war has added greatly to our ancient stock of experience, by exhibiting the state of our commerce, in various lights, as it was forced into different channels. The balance of trade has thence assumed a new appearance, as it is shewn by the custom-house books. While the exports were depressed for a time, as they had been still more by former wars, the imports rose in the

same proportion. The value of both, from England, was,

		Exports.		Imports.
in 1781	—	£. 10,569,187	—	£. 11,918,991
82	—	12,355,750	—	9,532,607
83	—	13,851,671	—	12,114,644
84	—	14,171,375	—	14,119,166
89	—	18,843,221	—	16,408,140
90	—	18,884,716	—	17,442,448
91	—	21,435,459	—	17,688,152
92	—	23,674,316	—	17,897,700

The number of ships, which, during those years, entered inwards, have also increased fully equal to the augmented value of cargoes. But, were we to form a judgment of the balance of trade by the difference, which thus appears from the custom-house books, we should be led to manifest error. Let us take the year 1784 for an example. Thus stood

	Exports.		Imports.		Balance.
The East-India trade	— £. 730,858	—	£. 2,996,548	—	£. 2,265,690
The West-India trade	— 1,160,070	—	3,372,785	—	2,212,715
The Greenland trade	—	—	54,050	—	54,050
	£. 1,890,928	—	£. 6,423,383	—	£. 4,532,455

Yet, these £. 4,532,455, consisting of the importations from our factories, our colonies, and fishery, create no legitimate balance, however much this vast sum may deduct from the apparent balance of the custom-house account. The same statement, and the same observation, may be made with regard to the trade of Scotland. To this may be added, a melancholy truth, that we have lost the export of corn, to the annual value of a million,

million, which is said to be owing rather to an increase of people, than to a decline of agriculture, and which passed with so much advantage into the balance of 1749—50—51. In years of scarcity, we now import large quantities of corn; and when so great a sum is taken from the one scale, and thrown into the other, the difference on the apparent balance must necessarily be immense.

Of the truth of these reasonings, and of those facts, the general exchanges, which are universally admitted to have been, for some years, extremely favourable to great Britain, are a sufficient confirmation. When there exists no disorder in the coin, the exchange is no bad test, though it is not an absolute proof, on which side the balance of payments turns, whether against a commercial country, or for it. The vast importations of foreign coin and bullion, since the establishment of peace, prove how much, and how generally, the exchanges have run in favour of this enterprising nation. And the price of bullion, which, during this period, has been much lower than had ever been known, leads us to infer, that the extent of those importations has been proportionally great.

In considering the balance of trade, it is to be lamented, that we cannot obtain, from the tonnage of vessels, entering inwards, the same satisfactory information, as we have already gained from the numbers of shipping, which, having carried out the merchandizes, were brought as a confirmation of the value of exported cargoes:  
for,

for, the materials of manufacture being much bulkier than the manufactures themselves, require a greater number of transports. It may, however, give a new view of an engaging subject, to see the tonnage of vessels, which entered inwards at different periods, compared with the supposed balance of trade.

Ships cleared Outwards.—1709.—Ships entered Inwards.

Tons Eng.	D <sup>o</sup> foreign.	Total.	Tons Eng.	D <sup>o</sup> foreign.	Total.
243,693	—	45,625	—	289,318	
			89,298	—	33,901
			—	—	123,199
			Favourable balance of ton-		
			nage	- - - - -	166,119
			289,318		
			Balance of merchandize		
			sent out, exclusive of		
			bullion	- - -	£.1,402,764

Ships cleared Outwards.—1718.—Ships entered Inwards.

Tons Eng.	D <sup>o</sup> foreign.	Total.	Tons Eng.	D <sup>o</sup> foreign.	Total.
427,962	—	16,809	—	444,771	
			353,871	—	15,517
			—	—	369,388
			Favourable balance of ton-		
			nage	- - - - -	75,383
			444,771		
			Unfavourable balance of		
			merchandize sent out,		
			exclusive of bullion -		
			£.308,000		

Ships cleared Outwards.—1737.—Ships entered Inwards.

Tons Eng.	D <sup>o</sup> foreign.	Total.	Tons Eng.	D <sup>o</sup> foreign.	Total.
476,941	—	26,627	—	503,568	
			374,593	—	45,409
			—	—	420,002
			Favourable balance of ton-		
			nage	- - - - -	83,566
			503,568		
			Balance of merchandize		
			sent out, exclusive of		
			bullion	- - -	£.3,008,705

Ships



## Ships cleared Outwards.—1751-2-3.—Ships entered Inwards

Tons Eng.	D <sup>o</sup> foreign.	Total.	Tons Eng.	D <sup>o</sup> foreign.	Total.
612,485	— 42,593	— 655,078	435,091	— 61,302	— 496,393
			Favourable balance of ton-		
			nage - - - - -	150,004	
		<u>655,078</u>			<u>655,078</u>
			Balance of merchandize		
			sent out, exclusive of		
			bullion - - - -	£.3,976,727	

## Ships cleared Outwards.—1771-2-3.—Ships entered Inwards.

Tons Eng.	D <sup>o</sup> foreign.	Total.	Tons Eng.	D <sup>o</sup> foreign.	Total.
711,730	— 63,294	— 775,024	608,066	— 123,870	— 731,936
			Favourable balance of ton-		
			nage - - - - -	43,088	
		<u>775,024</u>			<u>775,024</u>
			Balance of merchandize		
			sent out, exclusive of		
			bullion - - - -	£.3,518,858	

## Ships cleared Outwards.—1784.—Ships entered Inwards.

Tons Eng.	D <sup>o</sup> foreign.	Total.	Tons Eng.	D <sup>o</sup> foreign.	Total.
846,355	— 113,064	— 959,419	869,259	— 157,168	— 1,026,427
Unfavourable balance	— 67,008				
		<u>1,026,427</u>			<u>1,026,427</u>
Balance of merchandize					
sent out - - - -	£. 52,209				

## Ships cleared Outwards.—1790-1-2.—Ships entered Inwards.

Tons Eng.	D <sup>o</sup> foreign.	Total.	Tons Eng.	D <sup>o</sup> foreign.	Total.
1,329,979	— 163,778	— 1,493,757	1,250,741	— 284,843	— 1,535,584
Unfavourable balance	— 41,827				
		<u>1,535,584</u>			
			Balance of merchandize		
			sent out, exclusive of		
			bullion - - - -	£.3,655,397	

From

From the foregoing facts, men will probably draw their inferences, with regard to our debility, and decline, or to our healthfulness, and advancement, according to their usual modes of thinking, to their accustomed gloominess, or hilarity, of mind, or to the effusions of the company, which they commonly keep. One party, taking it for granted, amid their anxieties, that the national commerce, domestic and foreign, is in the last stage of a consumption, may possibly attribute a supposed idleness, and inattention, to the excessive luxury, in kind the most pernicious, in extent the most extravagant, which deeply pervade every order : the other party, directed in their inquiries by an habitual cheerfulness, may perhaps determine, from the busy occupations, which they see in the shop, and the field, as to our activity and attention, the natural forerunners of prosperity, and acquisition ; thinking that they perceive, in the heavy loaded ships, as they arrive, *the materials* of a manufacture, extensive and increasing. If any one wish for the aid of experience, in fixing his judgment, he need only examine the affairs of the American States, and of Ireland, during the effluxion of the last hundred years. A great balance of trade stood constantly against both those countries ; yet, both have more than trebled the numbers of their people, the amount of their productive labour, the value of their exported merchandize, and the extent of their real wealth. *Fact* has, at length, interposed to give certainty to doubt ; and *demonstration* has arrived to dispel gloominess, and to strengthen hope. The late Inspector-Ge-

neral of the Customs, Mr. Irving, whose services to the public will not soon be forgotten; and who, indeed, ought never to be mentioned but with praise; stated to the Committee of Secrecy of the House of Lords, from the details before him, that our *balance of trade*, according to a four-years average, ended in January 1796, amounted to *ten million and a half*, yearly; including, indeed, four million, as the annual profits of our East, and West, India trades; and supposing, that the value of British manufactures exported, exceeded the Custom-house value, about *thirty per cent.*—But, it has, since, been ascertained, by the duties collected under the convoy act, that the value of British manufactures exported, exceed the Custom-house value by *forty per cent.*

From the balance of trade, which, as an interesting subject, seemed to merit ample discussion, it is proper to advert to *the column of customs*, in the chronological table; because we may derive a supplemental proof of the successive increase of our trade, of our commercial knowledge, and of our real opulence. These duties had their commencement from the act of tonnage and poundage, at the Restoration, when the whole customs did not much exceed £.400,000. This law, which imposed *5 per cent.* of the value on goods *exported*, as well as on goods imported, on *domestic manufactures*, as well as on foreign merchandizes; and which laid particular taxes on *our own woollens*, and double taxes on all goods, when sent out by aliens; was surely framed by no very judicious plan, though two and a half  
per

*per cent.* of the value were allowed to be drawn back on goods that, having been imported, should be sent out in a twelvemonth. The publications of Mun, of Fortrey, and of Child, soon after the Restoration, diffused more universal acquaintance with commercial legislation. The alien duties on the export of native commodities, and domestic manufactures, were judiciously repealed, in 1673. The taxes on the exportation of woollens, of corn, meal, and bread, were happily removed in 1700. Yet, it was not till 1722, that, on a systematic consideration of the burdens, which obstructed trade, all duties on the export of British manufactures were withdrawn, except on a few articles, which, being regarded as *materials*, were still to be sent to rival nations with discouragements. These meliorations were doubtless considerable incentives to exportation, by enabling the merchants to send the goods so much cheaper to market. But, the imports were discouraged then, and have been successively burdened with new subsidies, and additional duties, till the nett revenue of customs, after various improvements, swelled to £.4,027,230, in 1792\*, and to  
£.7,538,355

\* When the eye is thrown over the column of Customs, in the Chronological Table, especially since the year 1785, it immediately perceives inequalities, in the produce of particular years, which were owing to particular causes. Suspended duties, which were due from the East-India Company, in the years 1782, and 1783, were paid in 1785, and in 1786. The regulations of *wine*, which took place on the 5th of July 1786, and on tobacco, the 10th of October 1789, made great changes in



£. 7,538,355, since, in the progress of war, and taxation.

The column of coinage was introduced, in the last place, as its proper station ; because the increase of coins, by means of the operations of the mint, arise generally from the profits of commerce, at least from the demand of circulation : and of consequence, the quantity of circulating money must, in every country, be in proportion, nearly, to the extent of business, or frequency of transfers. The fears of men, with regard to a wrong balance of trade, have not been, at any time, greater than the continual dread of a total deprivation of our coins. And both have produced a numerous class of writers, who have published their theories, not so much, perhaps, to enlighten the world, as to give vent to their lamentations.

While the rents of the land were paid in its products ; while the freemen contributed personal service, instead of a specified tax ; and while the arts had not yet been divided into their classes, there would be little use for the convenient measure of coins. The conversion of almost every service, and duty, into a payment of money, marks a considerable change, in our domestic affairs. And in proportion, as refinement gained ground of rude-  
the customs. And, by the Consolidation-Act, which commenced in 1787, a considerable advantage was gained for the revenue of customs, as well as for the promotion of trade, by the beneficial arrangements of the duties. The increase of the customs is, in other respects, to be attributed to the augmentation of commerce, and to the prevention of smuggling, and also, to additional taxes, during the late war.

ness, as industry prevailed over idleness, as manufacture found its way into the nation, and as commerce extended its operations, and its influence, coins must have become more numerous, in the subsequent ages; because they were more necessary. From the happy accession of Elizabeth, we may trace with sufficient certainty the progress, and extent, of our public coinage.

Coined by Queen Elizabeth, including the debased silver of the three preceding reigns		—	in gold	—	£. 1,200,000	
			in silver	—	4,632,932	
						£. 5,832,932
By King James		—	—	in gold	—	£. 800,000
				in silver	—	1,700,000
						£. 2,500,000
By Charles I.		—	—	in gold	—	£. 1,723,000
				in silver	—	8,776,544
						£. 10,499,544
By the Parliament and Cromwell, in silver		—	—			1,000,000
Total coined, during a century, from 1558, to 1659 <sup>a</sup> ,		—	in gold	—	£. 3,723,000	
			in silver	—	16,109,476	
						£. 19,832,476
Coined by Charles II.		—	—	£. 7,524,105		
by James II.		—	—	2,737,637		
						£. 10,261,742
by William III. (including the re-coinage)		—	—	— <sup>b</sup>		10,511,963
by Anne		—	—	— <sup>d</sup>		2,691,626
by George I.		—	—	— <sup>e</sup>		8,725,921
by George II. <sup>f</sup> from 1726		}	in gold	—	£. 11,662,216	
to 1760			in silver	—	304,360	
						£. 11,966,576
Total coined during a century, from 1659 to 1760		—				£. 44,157,828
Coined by George III. <sup>g</sup> before the 1 <sup>st</sup> January 1785		}	in gold	—	£. 30,457,805	
			in silver	—	7,126	
						£. 30,464,931
Coined from the 1 <sup>st</sup> January 1785,		}	in gold	—	£. 33,311,334	
to the 31 <sup>st</sup> December 1802			in silver	—	56,474	
						£. 33,368,308
The Total, in the present reign		—				£. 63,832,236

<sup>a</sup> And. Com. vol. ii. p. 105. <sup>b</sup> Ralph Hist. vol. i. p. 1078. <sup>c</sup> Campbell's Survey. <sup>d</sup> Ibid. <sup>e</sup> Ibid. <sup>f</sup> Tower Records. <sup>g</sup> Mint account.

It did not, however, escape the penetration of Davenant, or perhaps the sagacity of preceding writers,—“*that all this money was not co-existing at any one time:*” and he, therefore, endeavoured, with his usual industry, to ascertain the probable amount of our circulation, or the number of our coins, during every period, to which either his *conjecture*, or his *calculation*, could reach.

In 1600, as he states\*, there probably existed,

in gold £.1,500,000

in silver 2,500,000

£. 4,000,000;

*which were the tools, said he, we had to work with, when rise first began to make a figure in the commercial world.*

In 1660, there were only, in all likelihood, co-existing, of every preceding coinage, —

£.14,000,000.

Sir William Petty †, who lived nearer the time, and had better information, asserts, “that the re-coinage at the happy Restoration amounted to £. 5,600,600; whereby it is probable (some allowance being given for hoarded money) that the whole cash of England was then about — —

£. 6,000,000;

which, he conceived, was sufficient to drive the trade of England.”

And, a consideration of the progress of our commerce, from 1600 to 1660, as well as the extent of our mercantile transactions, will enable us to decide, which of the calculators was most accurate in his statement, and most satisfactory in his inference. Sir Josiah Child indeed remarked, in 1665 ‡, “*that all sorts of men complain much of the scarcity of money;*

\* Whit. edit. vol. i. p. 364.

† Pol. Arith. p. 278.

‡ And. Com. vol. ii. p. 142.

yet,

yet, that men did complain as much of a scarcity of money, ever since I knew the world ; for, *that this humour of complaining proceeds from the frailty of our natures*, it being natural for mankind to complain of the present, and to commend the times past." That experienced merchant attributed "*the pressing necessity for money, so visible throughout the kingdom*, to the trade of banking, which obstructs circulation, and advances usury." And, from Child's State of the Nation, during several years, subsequent to the Restoration, we may infer, that Petty was nearer the truth, in his representation, than Davenant.

If the amount of our traffic, foreign and domestic, doubled in the active period, between the Restoration and the Revolution, we ought from that circumstance to conclude, that the quantity of circulating coin ought to have been in the proportion of six to twelve ; consequently,

If there had been, in 1660	- -	£. 6,000,000,
There ought to have been in 1688		12,000,000 :
Yet, after a variety of <i>conjectures</i>		
and <i>calculations</i> , Davenant states*		
it at	- - - - -	<u>18,500,000 ;</u>

which, he insisted, was altogether necessary for carrying on our foreign, and domestic, traffic. But, the result of those conjectures, and of those calculations, derives little support, and less authenticity, from the facts before-mentioned ; which shewed,

\* Whit. edit. vol. i. p. 367.



that a country, which, for so many years paid considerable balances to the world, could not abound in coins. And there was a circumstance of still greater weight, that seems to have been little attended to by historians, or by theorists: a rise in the interest of money evinces a scarcity of specie; at least it demonstrates, that the supply is not sufficient for every demand. The *natural* interest of money was eight *per cent.* from 1624 to 1645; and it from this year gradually fell to six *per cent.* before the Restoration; so that the Parliament were enabled, in 1650, to fix by ordinance the *legal* interest at six *per cent* \*; which was confirmed by statute at the Restoration †. But, the *natural* interest of money gradually rose again, from six *per cent.* in 1660, to seven pounds six shillings and six-pence in 1690; and from this year to seven pounds ten shillings *per cent.* before the peace of Ryswick. From 1697, the natural interest of money gradually sunk, before the year 1706, to six *per cent.*; and continuing to fall, the Parliament were, thereby, induced [1713] to fix, by statute, the *legal* interest at five *per cent.* Yet,

In 1711, Davenant states, “ <i>that there might be of gold and silver coin in being,</i> ” to the	
amount of - - -	£. 12,000,000
In 1688, he had already found -	18,500,000
	<hr/>
Decrease in three-and-twenty years	£. 6,500,000
	<hr/>

\* And. Com. vol. ii. p. 85.

† 12 Ch. II. c. 13.

It is highly probable, however, that the value of the circulating coins might amount to £. 12,000,000 in 1711. The gradual advance of our domestic industry, and foreign traffic, the reform of the silver coin, the consequent augmentation of taxes, and circulation, the greater credit, both public and private, the sinking of the *natural* interest of money; all demonstrate the impossibility of any diminution of our coins, during the period, from the Revolution to the year 1711. Anderson\*, having given his suffrage to Davenant's statement of 1711, says, "that we may reasonably conclude, as our trade is considerably increased in fifty-one years, the gold and silver actually existing in Britain [1762] cannot be less than - - - £. 16,000,000:"

And we may fairly infer, from the reasonings of Anderson, that the gold and silver coins actually existing now [1786] amount to upwards of - - - £. 24,000,000.

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We have seen, during the present reign, an extraordinary augmentation of our manufactures, and our trade, a quicker transfer of property, a vast credit, a productive revenue, an unexampled demand at the mint for its coins; which all evince a greater use for money; and, consequently, a proportional supply. Speculation has been actually confirmed by facts, and experience. When, by an admirable

\* Commerce, vol. ii. p. 105.

operation, a salutary reform was made of the gold coin, there appeared, in consequence of that measure, a much greater quantity of circulating specie, than speculists had supposed, in opposition to experience.

The three proclamations—of 1773—of 1774—  
and 1776, brought in, of defective gold coin,  
the value, in tale, of        -        -        £. 15,563,593.

There, moreover, were three  
several fums of foreign gold,  
and light guineas, sent to the  
mint, by the Bank of Eng-  
land, from the end of 1771,  
to the end of 1777        —        5,200,723.

The total re-coined —        £. 20,764,316.

There remained, in the circle,  
heavy guineas of the former,  
and present, reign, light gui-  
neas, which were not brought  
in, and silver        —        —        £. 2,055,763.

There also were about two mil-  
lions of light guineas sent to  
America during the war, va-  
lued at        —        —        £. 2,000,000.

£. 24,820,079.\*

\* Lord Auckland's Letters, p. 215; Mr. Rose's Brief's Examination, sixth edition, App. No. 4.

If, from the amount of the coinage  
 of the present reign — — £.62,945,866,  
 the sum of the re-coinage, at the  
 end of 1777, be deducted — 20,764,316;

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we shall see, in the result, the sum,  
 which the increasing demand of  
 the present reign required, at the  
 mint, exclusive of the re-coinage £.42,181,550.

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It is not easy to discover, because proper data cannot be readily found, what proportion of the coins, which constituted, in tale, this vast balance, was afterwards melted, or exported. If one-fourth only was withdrawn from the circle of commerce, this circumstance alone, when compared with the quantity of money which, in 1777, was actually found in circulation, would demonstrate the existence of a greater number of coins; and, consequently, the amount, in tale, of £.31,636,152, in gold, and in silver, about £.2,250,000, to animate our traffic, in daily use\*. One truth is, however, clear, “*that every community, which has an equivalent to give, may always procure as many of the precious metals, wherever they may exist, as it wants*”; in the same manner as the individual, who has labour, or any other property, to offer in exchange, may at all times fill his coffers with medals, or with coins.

\* Such was the opinion of the Lords of the Committee of the most honourable Privy Council, appointed for considering the state of the coin. Report, p. 2—5.

Hence,



Hence, we may conclude with Mr. Hume, and with subsequent writers, on political œconomy, who were equal in judgment to him, that, while we preserve our people, our skill, and our industry, we may allow the specie to find its own way in the world, without any other protection, than what is due to the justness of our standard, in fineness and weight, or any other care, than to give continual notice to the credulous, to beware of the tricks of the clipper, the sweater, and the coiner.

In this manner have I reviewed the *Chronological Table*, with regard to our Shipping, our Exports, the Balance of our Trade, the Revenue of Customs, and the successive operations of the Mint. The *Chronological Table* gives, as it were, a bird's-eye view of our whole commercial concerns, from the Restoration to the present time, a long and busy period, of domestic dispute, and foreign war. And, the Chronological Table exhibits a retrospective mirror of our traffic, and revenue, which reflects a very flattering prospect of our future prosperity, with regard to both. We may now address the *despondent* with the gaiety of SWIFT:

“ Canst thou take delight in viewing  
This poor isle's approaching ruin,  
When thy *retrospection* vast  
Sees the glorious ages past?  
Happy nation, were we blind,  
Or had only eyes behind!

## C H A P. XIII.

*The Prosperity of Great Britain from 1783 to 1793.—The Causes assigned.—The East India Trade.—The Fisheries encouraged.—The New Navigation Act.—Foreign Treaties.—Manufactories promoted.—Agriculture encouraged.—A thousand Laws for local Improvements.—Revenue Acts.—Financial Operations.—Their salutary Consequences.*

SO prosperous have our affairs been, from the conclusion of the peace of 1783, to the commencement of the late war, that curiosity naturally desires to trace up the causes to their true sources. In order to gratify this desire, I propose to run over, rather than develope, the principal measures, which have chiefly contributed to raise this nation, from a condition of great despondency, at the first epoch, to a state of unrivalled prosperousness, at the last. And, I shall arrange those measures, 1st, as they tended to promote the private revenue of the people; and, 2dly, as they were proposed to enlarge the public revenue of the nation.

The affairs of the East India company, which, like the affairs of the state, were no doubt greatly deranged, at the re-establishment of peace, in 1784, divided our parties, in respect to the mode of restoring them.

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Our divisions on this head, were soon settled by several acts of parliament \*, for regulating, rather than suppressing, the company, for controuling its government, rather than destroying its powers. If to these laws, we add the Commutation Act †, which gave the company great facility in the sale of its tea, and the fair trader still greater advantages over the smuggler, we shall have a view sufficiently distinct of those measures, which we shall immediately find, produced the happiest effects. The credit of the company rose, in proportion as the directors were enabled to fulfil their engagements. They divided 8 *per cent.* to their proprietors; they paid their debts to the public, even sooner, than the most sanguine had expected: and, before September 1786, they were able to reduce the interest on their bond-debts, at home, from 5 *per cent.* to 4, with an avowal, that the creditors, who did not choose to accept of the reduced interest, should be paid the principal of their debts ‡. The value of British goods, which were yearly sent to China was, in the year 1792, £.626,000, though in 1783 and 84, the amount had only been

\* 24 G. III. ch. 34.—26 G. III. ch. 62.

† 24 G. III. ch. 38.

‡ The India Stock was,

in December 1783, at 120.

in December 1784, at 127.

in December 1785, at 155.

in December 1786, at 166.

in December 1792, at 191.

£. 120,000. The shipping, which yearly failed to China, according to a six years average, ending with 1792, carried 17,981 tons, though in the six years ending with 1783, the annual tonnage of the China ships was only 6,059. And there was a yearly increase, upon the fair importation of teas, of 12,503,459 pounds\*—The whole quantity of shipping employed annually in the India trade, according to a six years average, ending with 1776,

was,	-	-	-	-	12,071 tons.
D°, ending with 1792	-				26,033

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The whole value of British manufactures exported annually to India, according to a six years average, ending with 1774,

was,	-	-	-	-	£. 907,240
D°, ending with 1792	-				1,921,955

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Such was the beneficial result of the several measures, for regulating the India Company, with regard to our shipping, and manufactures, to the gains of individuals, and to the revenue of the nation!

All these were equally promoted by the various

\* The annual importation, according to a twelve years average, ending with 1784, was - - - lib. 5,605,074

D°, according to a six years average, ending					
with 1792	-	-	-	-	18,108,533

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The annual augmentation	-	-			lib. 12,503,459
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laws,



laws, which were passed, for encouraging our nautical interests. The home fisheries were promoted. The Greenland fishery was encouraged. The Newfoundland fishery was regulated. The South-whale fishery was, in a great measure, created. And, all these, owing to the enterprize of our traders, and the encouragement of the legislature\*, were carried to such an extent, that they may be said to have somewhat sunk under their own greatness, as must ever happen, when the ultimate demand for the products is not equal to the immediate supply. The nautical interests of the country were so much considered, and so effectually protected, by the act for *the increase of shipping*, that this statute will be for ever regarded, with thankful recollection, as the great charter of our navigation, which created the authentic register of our naval prosperity †.

Additional employment was given to our ships, and our seamen, by means of our treaties with foreign nations. The commercial agreement with France, in 1786, opened a wide field for the adventures of our traders. Our conventions with Spain, by adding more certainty to our commercial enterprizes, in the other hemisphere, gave new occupations to our industrious classes at home. Our treaties with Prussia, and with Holland, had their

\* By 26 Geo. III. ch. 41, 45, 50, 81; 27 Geo. III. ch. 10; 28 Geo. III. ch. 20.

† 26 Geo. III. ch. 60; and 26 Geo. III. ch. 86; and 27 Geo. III. ch. 19.

facilities,

facilities, which communicated energy to our traffic\*. And, the renewment of our commercial treaty with Russia has added stability to our commerce, in that country, which before was rather uncertain.

Mean time our several manufactories were greatly promoted by the several laws, which were made, year after year, for their encouragement †.

Agriculture was, at the same time, incited by the various measures, which were adopted, for giving energy, and effect, to her operations. The forfeited estates in Scotland were restored ‡. The crown lands were made more useful to the individual, and the public. The growth of hemp and flax was further encouraged §. And, the corn laws, that lay in a state of confusion through many statutes, were reduced into a system, which had for its end, the interests, properly understood, both of the grower, and consumer ¶. Had those laws produced no other benefit to the country, than establishing an effectual mode, for ascertaining the average price of

\* See the treaties, which are mentioned above, in the Collection of Treaties, that was published by Stockdale, in 1790.

† In the ten years, ending with 1793, there were twenty-nine statutes passed, for the encouragement of several manufactures, exclusive of one hundred and fourteen acts, for the encouragement of commerce. See the Statute-book.

‡ 24 Geo. III. ch. 57.

§ By 26 Geo. III. ch. 43.

¶ 31 Geo. III. ch. 30.—23 Geo. III. ch. 55.

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corn,

corn, and thereby preventing causeless alarm, they had merited the praise of most useful regulations.

During the ten sessions, which ended with that of 1793, the Parliament, with unexampled diligence, enacted no fewer than *one thousand, nine hundred, and thirty-four distinct statutes*, for promoting, in various ways, the true interest of the people. Of these, there were 625 private and 1309 public acts; there were twenty-nine, for improving manufactures; one hundred and fourteen, for commercial purposes: and, above all, there were sixty-six, for improving, and strengthening, our constitutional system, during a period, when it was supposed, that the constitution, like our neglected mansions, was falling fast into ruins, without the slightest repairs.

In addition to all those laws, for promoting the private revenue of the people, there passed in the eight years, ending with 1792, *seven hundred and fifty* Acts of Parliament, for making local improvements, and domestic meliorations. Of this remarkable fact, here is a curious proof, from the Statute-book, in the following

TABLE; shewing the Number of Acts of Parliament, which passed, in each of the following Years, for making Roads and Bridges, &c.; Canals and Harbours, &c.; for Inclosures and Draining, &c.; for Paving and other Parochial Improvements.

	1785	1786	1787	1788	1789	1790	1791	1792	Total.
Roads, Bridges, &c. -	31	40	30	37	36	30	44	54	302
Canals, Harbours, &c.	7	4	3	5	6	9	13	17	64
Inclosures, Draining, &c.	22	25	19	36	36	27	39	41	245
Paving, and other Parochial Improvements }	20	14	14	14	18	20	20	19	139
The Total -	80	83	66	92	96	86	116	131	750

There is, moreover, a class of statutes, which, as they at once promote the private revenue of the people, and the public revenue of the nation, are of an amphibious nature. Of this kind were the acts, for regulating, and controuling, the India Company. We have seen what an augmentation of shipping they created; what an increase of British manufactures they sent out; and, in addition to these commercial benefits, how much they enabled the Company to satisfy their debts to the public\*. Of this mixed kind also was the commutation-act, which, by destroying smuggling, and facilitating fair

\* Of those debts, there were paid in 1785, £. 401,118. 17. 1.; and in 1786, £. 522,700. 7. 6.; amounting to £. 923.519. 4. 7.



trade, gave rise to a great private commerce, while it brought a large contribution to the public revenue\*.

Much of this merit has the consolidation act, which facilitates commerce, by its simplifications, and enriches the public income, by its contributions†. The various acts against smuggling, as far as they enlarge fair trade, and make the established taxes more productive, are entitled to equal praise. The wine act‡, and the tobacco act§, are both entitled to this commendation. The various improvements in the post-office, fairly merit, yet greater laud. We could have little trade, without the post-office, which, by means of trade, yields a vast revenue to the nation. As a proof of this, and of the great augmentation of our commercial cor-

\* The immediate effect of this efficient measure was the legal importation of an additional quantity of tea, amounting to 12,503,459 lb. a year. The collateral consequences were, as we have seen, a vast export of British manufactures, and a great employment of British shipping.

† Those contributions amounted, in 1792, to £.75,434; exclusive of the benefits, which that act did to trade, which are to be inferred, from the vast increase of the imports and exports.

‡ The increased quantity of wine imported, in consequence of that act, was 16,694 tons a year, which yielded an increased and net revenue of £. 290,143.

§ While this act promoted the real interest of the fair trader, it augmented the public revenue at least £. 154,000 a year.

respondence,

respondence, see the subjoined statement of the *gross* revenue of the post-office, in the following years, ending on the

5 April 1786	-	£.471,176	—	5 April 1787	-	£.474,347
D° - 1788	-	509,131	—	D° - 1789	-	514,538
D° - 1790	-	533,198	—	D° - 1791	-	575,079
D° - 1792	-	585,432	—	D° - 1793	-	607,268

But, of all the measures, which have been just described, as of an amphibious nature, the sinking-fund, which began to work, in the three months, that ended on the 31st October 1786, has produced the greatest facility to individuals, and benefit to the public:—To individuals, by creating a rapid circulation, and plenty of money, for the uses of business, by raising at once the value of the produce of our land and labour, and the price of our funds: To the public, by disincumbering the nation, before the 1st of February 1793, of £.10,109,400; when the sinking-fund itself had increased to £.1,669,582 a year.

Such were the various means, which were wisely adopted, for promoting the revenue of the people, since 1783, either by direct encouragement, or by incidental help. Let us now take a slight view of the revenue of the nation, during its depression, in 1784; of the measures, which were adopted for raising it; and of the result, during its exaltation,

though the retrospect seldom affords the pleasures of the prospect.

There was, at that epoch, a vast unfunded debt of nine-and-twenty millions, which pressed down the value of the public funds, and even prevented the productiveness of the national income.

The yearly interest of the funded debt, on the		
5th Jan. 1784, was	— — —	£.8,000,284
The yearly interest of exchequer bills was	—	260,000
The annual charges on the aggregate fund, and		
the appropriated duties, were	— —	1,040,000
The usual establishments were about	—	4,000,000
		<hr/>
The total to be provided for	—	£.13,300,284
For the discharge of this great sum, there		
was only the permanent income, on the		
5th of Jan. 1784, amounting to	—£. 9,671,206	
The annual land and malt taxes about	2,560,000	
		<hr/>
		12,231,206
		<hr/>
The total of the annual deficiency in 1784—	£.1,069,078	
		<hr/>

Such was nearly the state of the national account of expenditure, and income, during the unpropitious period of 1784, while the unfunded debt depressed the whole system of our funds, and credit\*!

The same means, which were, at that epoch, employed to depress the nation, eventually promoted

\* The three *per cent.* consols, which had risen to 69, in March, 1783, fell to 54 $\frac{5}{8}$ , but rose to 58, in 1784, and fluctuated nearly at that rate till July, 1785.

its salvation. So much was said of the ruin of the country, that the country was almost persuaded, that it was indeed on the verge of ruin. Yet, when the nation was, by those means, convinced, that effectual measures were necessary, the business of saving it, was more than half achieved.

The most efficient measure, for obtaining this great end, was to fund, in the years 1784, and 1785, the floating debts of the navy, of the victualling, and of the ordnance, departments, to so great an amount, as to require taxes, which produced £.938,000, for paying the interest. At the same time, that new taxes were imposed, systematic measures were effectually pursued, for improving the collection of the old, which is ever the best œconomy. Some of the laws, for that salutary purpose, have been already noticed. The smuggling-act, the commutation act, and other similar laws, have been also mentioned, as wise measures, which at once promoted the private income of individuals, and the public revenue of the nation. And, the beneficial effects evince, that they were attended with the most salutary consequences.



The best proof of this may be found in the public accounts of the national income, and expenditure, during the year 1786 :

The nett payments into the exchequer, in the twelvemonth, which ended on the 5th Jan. 1786, - £.15,397,471  
 The expenditure, in this period, was 14,478,181

The annual surplus of the income\* £. 919,290

By those measures, the nation was now saved. This, also, was the epoch of the sinking-fund, which carried salvation up to prosperity. There were other duties added to that surplus of income ; so as to make that fund an efficient million a year. To this large sum were added such annuities for years, and lives, as might expire, in the effluxion of time. And, to the whole was thrown in some casual sums, for giving greater effect to its progressive operations. Such was the sinking fund, which was, at that epoch, invariably appropriated, for buying, quarterly, such of the public securities, as should appear to be most depreciated, and thereby to offer the best bargain to the commissioners, who were appointed to buy them, on behalf of the public. Before the first of August 1794, there had been received into this fund, since its

\* See the report of the select committee for examining the accounts of the public income and expenditure, 21st March 1796.

establishment,

establishment, £.10,599,265, which were laid out by the commissioners, in purchasing various public securities, amounting to £.13,617,895\*. This, then, was the amount of the national debt, which had been by those means, paid off, before the first of August 1794. The sum, which was laid out for that purpose, during the preceding quarter, amounted to £.408,363. And, if we were to form a judgment, from this great sum, which was thus applied, we might infer, that the sinking-fund had, in no long period, nearly doubled itself, by the productive operations of compound interest, with some additional aids.

This sinking-fund not only raised the price of the public securities, by creating a constant demand for them, but it promoted the industrious pursuits of the people, by keeping circulation full, and it thereby made the permanent income more

\* The general average, at which that great capital was purchased, was  $77\frac{1}{8}$  per cent. It is curious to observe the operations of the sinking-fund, during those times, when we enjoyed peace, and were threatened with hostilities, from the prices, which were paid by the commissioners for the 3 per cent. consols, in every quarter.—The first quarter, ended on the 31st of October 1786, during which the consols were purchased at  $77\frac{1}{4}$ : The prices fluctuated, in the following quarters, as under:—

1787.			1788.		1789.		1790.		1791.		1792.		1793.	
Qr.		Pr.	Qr.	Pr.	Qr.	Pr.	Qr.	Pr.	Qr.	Pr.	Qr.	Pr.	Qr.	Pr.
2 ending	31 January	$74\frac{1}{2}$	6 . 76	10 . $73\frac{1}{2}$	14 . 78	18 . $79\frac{3}{8}$	22 . $88\frac{3}{8}$	26 . $78\frac{1}{4}$						
3 ———	30 April -	76	7 . $75\frac{1}{2}$	11 . 74	15 . $78\frac{7}{8}$	19 . $79\frac{1}{4}$	23 . $96\frac{1}{2}$	27 . 75						
4 ———	31 July -	$74\frac{1}{2}$	8 . $74\frac{1}{2}$	12 . $76\frac{1}{2}$	16 . $73\frac{1}{4}$	20 . $81\frac{1}{2}$	24 . $90\frac{1}{2}$	28 . $76\frac{1}{2}$						
5 ———	31 October	$71\frac{1}{2}$	9 . $74\frac{1}{2}$	13 . $80\frac{1}{8}$	17 . $76\frac{7}{8}$	21 . $88\frac{1}{4}$	25 . $90\frac{1}{4}$	29 . $75\frac{3}{8}$						

productive,

productive, during every successive year. Thus, the permanent taxes, produced, in the twelvemonth, ending on the 5th of Jan. 1787 - £.11,867,055

5th of Jan. 1788 - 12,923,134

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5th of Jan. 1792 - 14,132,000

5th of Jan. 1793 - 14,284,295

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The whole revenue, in 1783, was *below* the establishment £.2,000,000.

The whole revenue, in 1792, was *above* the establishment £.2,031,000\*.

Such, then, was the revenue of the nation, during the depression, in 1783; the principal measures, which were adopted, for raising it; and such was the amount of its exaltation; when Great Britain was forced into another war, by the dire necessity of unprovoked hostilities.

\* The Brief Examination, p. 53.

## CHAP. XIV.

*The Strength of Britain in 1793.—From her Populoufness.—From her Trade.—From the Numbers of her Shipping and Sailors.—From the Magnitude of the Royal Navy.—From her Revenue.—The Losses of her Trade.—The Bankruptcies of 1793.—The Lapse of the Bank of England.—Our vast Commerce.—The Improvement of the Country.—The Corn Trade.—Finance Operations.—The Peace.—The Conclusion.*

THE judicious reader has already determined, from the experience of the past, that the nation was never more able to engage, in vigorous war, than at the great epoch of her prosperity, in 1792. We never had so many people, nor so many enlightened, and industrious, people, who were usefully employed; and who, with augmented capitals, obtained greater gains. We never exported so great an amount of the products of our land and labour; as the foregoing facts have shown, and the following details will demonstrate:

The



The value of British manufactures, which were annually exported to the several countries, in Europe, except to the British dominions:—

	Six years average, ending with 1774.	Six years average, ending with 1792.
To Denmark and Norway	- £. 97,034	— £. 160,131
To Russia - - -	- 132,257	— 278,054
To Sweden - - -	- 22,090	— 41,575
To the East Country - -	- 62,996	— 78,674
To Germany - - -	- 431,223	— 763,160
To Holland - - -	- 741,886	— 746,715
To Flanders - - -	- 332,667	— 386,054
To France - - -	- 87,164	— 717,807
To Spain and the Canaries -	- 878,066	— 605,055
To Portugal and Madeira -	- 578,951	— 643,553
To the Streights and Gibraltar	136,713	— 250,228
To Italy and Venice - -	- 618,817	— 722,221
To Turkey - - -	- 65,189	— 73,026
	<u>£. 4,185,053</u>	<u>£. 5,466,253</u>

The value of British manufactures, which were annually exported to the British dominions, in Europe:

	Six years average, ending with 1774.	Six years average, ending with 1792.
To Ireland - - -	- £. 1,024,231	— £. 1,352,291
To the Isle of Man - -	- 2,893	— 17,717
To Guernsey, Jersey, &c. -	- 36,201	— 73,342
To Greenland - - -	- 2	— 11
	<u>£. 1,063,327</u>	<u>£. 1,443,361</u>

The

The value of British manufactures, which were annually exported to all other countries, without Europe:—

	Six years average, ending with 1774.	Six years average, ending with 1792.
To the British Colonies in		
America - -	£. 310,946	£. 697,205
To the States of America -	2,216,824	2,807,306
To the West Indies - -	1,209,265	1,845,962
To the East Indies - -	907,240	1,921,955
To New Holland - -	—	3,179
To Africa - -	449,364	568,663
To the South Whale Fishery -	—	75
	<u>£. 5,093,639</u>	<u>£. 7,844,345</u>

We never had, at any former period, so many shipping, either for the uses of traffic, or war, as at the beginning of the late hostilities; as the subjoined details will clearly evince:—

Av. of years.	Ships cleared outwards.			Val. of Cargoes.
	Tons Eng.	Tons foreign.	Total.	
In 1772 }	795,943	64,232	680,175	£. 15,613,003
73 }				
74 }				
1785 }	1,012,899	117,471	1,130,370	17,123,373
86 }				
87 }				
1790 }	1,329,979	163,778	1,493,757	22,585,771
91 }				
92 }				

From these details, it is sufficiently apparent, that we employ upwards of *five hundred and thirty-four thousand* tons of shipping, more than at the commencement of the American war; and export a greater

greater value of cargoes, to the vast amount of £.6,972,768. Of our commercial prosperity, we shall find supplemental proofs, if we examine the *gross* income of the *post-office*, which has been already stated \*; and which shows clearly how commerce, and revenue, may promote each other. It is equally true, that the navigation, and nautical strength, of the country go hand in hand together: the mercantile shipping maintain our naval militia, during peace, and our naval militia protect the mercantile shipping, in war. The amount of both will appear in the subjoined TABLE; comprehending the number of *ships*, with their *tonnage*, and *men*, within every part of the British dominions, in the following years: —

	1791.			1792.			1793. †		
	<i>Ships.</i>	<i>Tons.</i>	<i>Men.</i>	<i>Ships.</i>	<i>Tons.</i>	<i>Men.</i>	<i>Ships.</i>	<i>Tons.</i>	<i>Men.</i>
England -	10,423	1,168,469	86,397	10,633	1,186,610	87,569	10,779	1,206,778	87,393
Scotland -	2,104	161,486	13,777	2,143	162,274	13,491	2,122	160,642	13,080
Ireland -	1,176	69,233	6,638	1,193	69,567	6,730	1,181	67,790	6,437
The Colonies	1,686	96,545	8,299	1,745	103,316	8,389	1,839	111,204	9,491
Jersey -	81	6,144	649	91	6,851	728	92	6,787	1,087
Guernsey -	93	6,629	482	97	7,050	513	89	7,142	661
Man -	84	2,895	371	177	4,477	866	177	4,177	810
The Total	15,647	1,511,401	117,113	16,079	1,540,145	118,286	16,329	1,564,520	118,952

\* In page 277.

† The year 1793 contains the shipping, which were registered between the 30th of September 1792, and the 30th of September 1793: the accounts being made up yearly to those dates. The numbers, which appear in the account of 1793, as prize ships, made free as British, were 661 vessels, containing 97,969 tons.

Such

Such were the number of ships, and sailors, which, in those years, belonged to the merchants, within the British dominions; and which, by proper management, may be all converted to the uses of war, if the royal navy were less equal to its various objects.

By examining the following details, we shall acquire sufficient information, with regard to the comparative state of the *Royal Navy*, in the following years:—It consisted,

		Tons.
In 1760, of	—	300,416
In 1774, of	—	276,046
In 1792, of	—	433,239*
In 1800, of	—	790,950.

But, the greatest fleet is of little avail, if we had not money to put it in motion. We never had so great a permanent revenue as in 1792. We never had so efficient a sinking-fund, to give energy to private gains, and to augment the public income, as

\* The whole Royal Navy was then composed of

Nº.	Rates.	Tons.
7	1st	15,664
21	2d	41,125
112	3d	176,062
21	4th	22,413
103	5th	84,115
42	6th	23,330
192	Sloops, &c.	70,530
<u>498</u>		<u>433,239</u>

when



when hostilities began. By the simplification, which has been lately introduced into the mode of stating the accounts, the amount of the national income, and expenditure, in every year, becomes apparent to every eye, the moment the statement is presented to parliament. It equally contributes towards our national strength, that an account of the produce, which each particular tax yields, is now laid before the parliament, in order to show, which of them are productive, and which of them are deficient. The appointment of commissioners, for controuling the army accounts, have made all officers more careful, both of their receipts, and disbursements. The establishing of a new board, for examining the public accounts, has induced all persons, who receive public money, to be more attentive, in the expenditure, and more punctual, in their settlements. And, the great example, which has been lately made, of a strict enquiry, with regard to "unaccounted millions," and the subsequent repayment of many thousands, has operated as one of the resources of the state, during the late hostilities; as rigid œconomy, in private life, is the most productive income. The facility, with which supplies were found for the late campaigns, is the best evidence of the truth of the foregoing positions.

In the midst of the greatest prosperity, which this flourishing nation ever experienced, whether we regard the income of individuals, or the revenue of the State, ensued, at the end of 1792, what was denominated, at the time, the "universal wreck of credit,"

credit," in Britain. The allusion was to the numerous bankruptcies, which, certainly, happened at that grievous epoch. I thought then, as I now think, that those bankruptcies had no connection with the beginning of war: and, I still think, as I then declared, that the derangement of our private credit was altogether owing to an *impeded circulation*, which is, doubtless, a commercial misfortune of great magnitude. An inquiry into the cause of those bankruptcies will develop some curious circumstances, will ascertain some important facts, and will inculcate some useful instruction.

At the portal of this inquiry, we shall find a remark of Lord Kaims, which is the key to this subject. He states it, as a fact, that, from 1694, to 1744, there were, in Scotland, only *thirty-four cessio bonorum* [bankruptcies;] and, he infers from the fact, as a consequence, how languidly trade was then carried on. From 1744 to 1771 there have been yearly, thrice thirty-four [bankruptcies]; which is a proof, he adds, of the rapid progress of trade. Every one, he concludes, is roused to adventure, though every one cannot gain\*. Had all been like this! but, alas! seldom is it, that Lord Kaims, with all his celebrity for labour, states his facts with so much accuracy, or draws his inferences with so much precision.

We may see a similar progress in the annals of our commerce in England. In the infancy of our

\* Sketch of the History of Man, 12mo. vol. I. p. 92.

traffic, the bankrupt was regarded by the law, as a criminal, who had defrauded his creditors. When commerce began to be more practised, and better understood, the bankrupt was at length considered by our legislature, and lawyers, as unfortunate, rather than fraudulent. The trade of England, after languishing, in its childhood, for ages, was, even at the commencement of this century, only in its infancy. And, at that epoch, we had scarcely, in England, *forty* bankruptcies in a twelvemonth. I have, in quest of facts, inspected the London Gazette, that melancholy chronicle of our commercial failures; and from it have compiled such a chronological statement of annual bankruptcies, as hath all the accuracy, that such an inquiry easily admits, or truth absolutely requires. I have thrown it into the comprehensive form of a Table, which is here subjoined:—

A TABLE; showing the Number of BANKRUPTCIES, in every Month, during the following Years, from 1700 to 1793:

	1700	1701	1702	1710	1714	1715	1720	1726	1727	1728	1736	1737	17	8	1739	1740	1741	1744	1745	1746	1748	1749
January	-	3	4	19	17	6	22	34	35	34	9	18	13	30	30	27	20	16	21	20	29	20
February	3	3	1	25	17	21	17	37	40	55	18	15	21	26	26	32	22	18	20	15	26	23
March	-	2	4	19	23	15	17	36	58	61	23	20	24	15	15	29	22	18	20	18	19	14
April	6	2	2	23	19	6	12	26	32	20	19	16	22	27	27	27	34	19	25	17	21	20
May	-	2	3	6	17	12	23	25	33	35	16	27	22	27	24	23	23	16	9	15	28	17
June	-	4	5	13	15	17	14	42	47	35	20	19	20	21	21	18	16	10	14	16	17	14
July	-	3	3	8	17	13	16	39	26	33	24	25	8	16	21	15	12	20	14	14	14	14
August	-	7	4	20	3	13	19	20	32	20	20	11	16	17	9	7	8	16	8	13	17	15
September	-	3	-	18	8	16	10	22	24	17	13	15	10	10	27	17	12	15	6	18	5	5
October	-	4	2	15	14	10	23	37	34	32	22	15	22	21	31	20	21	14	10	15	15	15
November	-	3	5	-	16	15	16	26	34	44	31	29	24	29	32	23	31	18	14	18	17	17
December	4	3	1	10	13	13	34	49	37	35	27	15	25	21	17	20	16	9	10	23	10	10
	38	38	30	200	173	169	235	415	446	388	240	220	232	263	288	255	197	200	159	226	200	200

Continued.

	1752	1753	1754	1755	1757	1762	1763	1764	1772	1773	1774	1778	1779	1780	1781	1782	1783	1784	1791	1792	1793
January	25	20	25	41	24	23	24	25	39	48	25	57	50	38	33	61	46	67	60	58	77
February	17	11	30	26	20	19	9	40	25	62	29	50	57	49	48	45	53	57	53	38	87
March	-	15	24	15	31	19	14	33	31	49	33	64	43	41	32	49	54	27	50	53	105
April	-	23	20	26	26	20	25	3	47	54	33	53	48	39	34	51	35	56	36	30	188
May	-	9	28	35	23	28	17	42	37	57	35	70	65	48	46	52	66	42	66	57	209
June	-	10	10	15	16	28	14	14	17	34	42	56	45	35	22	37	41	42	42	69	158
July	-	12	15	20	10	19	11	18	70	37	28	52	30	37	40	40	48	45	46	41	108
August	-	8	20	15	17	13	12	12	44	66	24	39	30	20	30	37	27	17	56	39	87
September	-	3	10	1	14	13	6	24	18	54	35	15	34	35	15	18	36	38	30	49	53
October	-	7	10	18	14	21	25	11	12	42	4	19	34	29	34	23	41	44	36	34	65
November	-	15	20	18	24	22	35	28	55	40	33	83	67	57	61	47	56	56	65	105	97
December	14	21	13	30	35	16	30	26	47	33	24	60	45	33	30	41	30	34	66	47	70
	158	214	244	278	274	205	233	301	525	562	560	675	544	449	478	537	528	517	604	628	1304



Here, let us pause awhile.—This curious, and instructive, Table furnishes important facts, which inculcate useful instruction. It is apparent, from those facts, that in the exact proportion, as our traffic increased, from its infancy to manhood, the number of bankruptcies, at every period, bore a just proportion to the amount of our trade, and the frequency of our commercial dealings. The traders continually adventured out upon the uncertain ocean of commerce, though they did not all return, with happy gales, and equal success, into port. And, the nation, which beheld the shipwreck of their fortunes, grew rich from their enterprizes, while she pitied the unhappiness of their fate.

If this *Table* be a faithful mirror of our commercial misfortunes, we may see that the commencement of Queen Anne's war did not greatly incommode our traders. The bustle, and business, of her hostilities appear to have increased the number of bankrupts. The rebellion of 1715 seems to have made none. The South-sea year, 1720, appears to have involved our merchants in the burst of bubbles, though it was public, rather than private, credit, which was chiefly affected, during this unhappy year of projects. Our bankruptcies now regularly increased with the augmentation of our trade. The rebellion of 1745 overturned none of our commercial houses. The war of 1756 seems to have done a little more mischief, though that mischief seems to have decreased, as hostilities went on. The peace of 1763 augmented the number of /  
bankruptcies,

bankruptcies, though the commercial distresses of that period seem to have been more in sound, than in reality. With our traffic, and business, our bankruptcies continued to increase in number, and magnitude. We perceive how many they were augmented, during 1772, and 1773, when *our circulation was impeded*, at a moment of uncommon prosperity. We see a smaller number of bankruptcies, in 1781, when our trade was the most depressed, during the American war, than in 1772, and 1773. The two most prosperous years, which this nation ever knew, were 1791, and 1792: yet, strange to tell, the number of our bankruptcies was larger than the amount of them in 1781, the most disastrous year of the American war; so different are the informations of *fact* from the deductions of *theory*.

We might learn from experience, that prosperity generally leads on to adversity, as the highest health is often the forerunner of the worst diseases; the chills of ague, or the flames of calenture. We perceive, through the several months of 1791, and still more in 1792, than there lurked, in our commercial habit, the predisposing causes of our commercial maladies, which broke out into such a paroxysm, during 1793. History will record the month of November 1792, as a memorable epoch in our annals. It was peculiarly unfortunate to our traders. Yet, was it a month propitious to our constitution. Whether the apprehensions of that epoch produced any of the numerous bankruptcies of No-

vember 1792, I pretend not to know. I believe, that all terrors disappeared, when the parliament was called, the militia were embodied, and, above all, when the nation, with an overpowering voice, avowed her attachment to the constitution, and promised her support of the laws.

Our domestic quiet was, by these means, scarcely secured, when the French, after various threats, declared war against Great Britain, and Holland, on the first of February 1793. The unusual bankruptcies, in the month of January preceding, can hardly be attributed to this subsequent measure. The first bankruptcy, which created suspicion, from its amount, was the failure of Donald and Burton, on the 15th of February 1793. They were engaged in the most uncertain of all traffics; in the trade of corn; in speculations on *American* corn: but, they had sustained no loss from the war. On Tuesday evening, the 19th of February, the Bank of England threw out the paper of Lane, Son, and Frazer, who had never recovered the shocks of the American war. And, next morning, they stopt payment, to the amount of almost a million of money. This great failure involved the fate of several very substantial traders. But, none of those houses had sustained any damage from the war. *Suspicion* was now carried up to *alarm*, and, every merchant, and every banker, who was concerned, in the circulation of negotiable paper, met with unusual obstructions, in their daily business. Yet, it was not till the 16th of March, that the long-established  
house

house of Burton, Forbes, and Gregory, stopt, which was followed, on the 18th, by the failure of their correspondents, Caldwell and Company, of Liverpool, to the amount of nearly a million. Still, neither of these great circulators of paper had sustained any loss from the war. And, as suspicion had been carried up to alarm, alarm was now magnified into panic.

In the midst of this terror, the whole city of London was frightened at *the rule of three*. It was an easy calculation, by which it was demonstrated, that, if one house failed for a million, ten houses might fail for *ten millions*. Neither these calculators, in their closets, nor those traders, in their counting-houses, ever reflected, that one bankrupt might pay five shillings in the pound, a second ten shillings, a third fifteen shillings, a fourth twenty shillings, and a fifth five-and-twenty shillings, in the pound. In fact, several bankers, during that panic terror, paused in their payments, who immediately went on as usual with their business, and some great traders, who were obliged to stop, soon paid twenty shillings in the pound. Yet, all this while, we had not felt the stroke of an enemy. In this manner, terror created distrust, distrust impeded circulation, and an impeded circulation is the greatest misfortune, that can afflict a commercial nation.

Such, then, were the real causes of our commercial distresses ! And, such was the sad termination of seven years of the greatest prosperity, both public and private, which this nation had ever enjoyed !



In the midst of this prosperity, a bank was erected, in every market-town, I was going to say, in every village. The vast business in the country created these banks; and these banks created, by their facilities, vast business. The rise in the price of the public stocks drew immense sums of money from the country to London; and the still greater rise of the public stocks drove vast sums of money from London to the country. Much of this money was placed in the country banks, which employed it, in speculations, to relieve themselves from this fullness. But, of speculations there is no end. The country bankers tried various projects to force a greater number of their notes into circulation, than the business of the nation demanded. They destroyed, by their own imprudence, the credit of their own notes, which must ever depend on the near proportion of the demand to the supply. The country bankers became ambitious of furnishing not only the country, but London, with notes. For this purpose; many of them issued notes, optional, to be paid, in the country, or in London\*. By these means their notes came oftener, and in greater numbers, to London, than were welcome, in the shops of London. These notes became discredited, not only in proportion as the supply was greater than the demand for them, but as the banks

\* By a list of English country banks, which I have now before me, containing 279, though not the whole number, it appears, that of the 279, no fewer than 204 issued *optional* notes, and of these last 71 stop payment,

were distant, and unknown. The projects, and arts, by which these notes were pushed into the circle of trade, were regarded with a very evil eye by those, who, in this management, saw great imprudence, in many, and a little fraudulence, in some. When suspicion stalked out to create alarm, and alarm ran about to excite panic, more than four hundred country banks in England sustained a shock; all were shaken; upwards of *a hundred* stooped; some of which, however, afterwards went on, in their usual course of punctual payments.

The many which stooped, the many that paused, all demonstrate how greatly they contributed to our commercial misery. The whole number of country banks in England was unknown; their capitals, and characters, were unknown: Their imprudence only was known, which had already shaken their own credit. And suspicion fastened upon all, though the event has proved, that they were generally more stable, than had been at first supposed. Yet, few *foreign* merchants failed. The country banks, and country traders, were those, who chiefly swelled the unfortunate number of our monthly bankruptcies. And this comparison is alone sufficient to show, that the cause of our commercial maladies arose at home, without infection from abroad; that it arose from the fulness of peace, without the misfortunes of war.

Happy is it for mankind, that they see little into futurity. Had it been foreseen that, in a few months, at the commencement of hostilities, a hundred banks would stop, and in the same twelve-

months,

months, thirteen hundred bankruptcies would happen; the whole nation had trembled to its center. Posterity will scarcely credit the record of the facts, that after such a storm, in three short months, our confidence, and credit, were restored. Unusual measures were resorted to, in parliament, to prevent the universal wreck of credit. Perhaps the parliament thought, with Lord Hardwicke, that, if there be no precedent, we will make one. The very first emission of exchequer bills, however, in 1696, for supporting credit, and helping commerce, during *the recoinage*, was a precedent in point\*. The issuing of exchequer bills, in 1793, was an uncommon, but a very salutary, measure. The whole nation was supported, and *soothed*, by the appointment of commissioners, for granting aid to private credit, by exchequer bills. There never was a measure, so little alarming, and so completely effectual, as this immediately proved. Of the £. 5,000,000 of exchequer bills, that were allowed, the whole number of applications for loans was 332, amounting, in all, to the sum of £. 3,855,624. Of these applications, 238, amounting to the sum of £. 2,202,200, were granted. Of the remaining 94 applications, 45 for the sum of £. 1,215,000 were withdrawn, or not pursued by the claimants: and 49 applications, for the sum of £. 438,324, were rejected, either as not coming within the purpose of

\* Anderson's Chron. Com. vol. ii. p. 213.—It is worthy of remark, that in 1696 there were exchequer-bills issued for as small sums as £. 5. each, which proves that they were intended for common use.

the act, or on account of the inability of the parties to give satisfactory security. The whole sum, which was advanced on loan, has been repaid without difficulty, or distress. Of the persons, who were thus assisted, only two became bankrupt. These facts prove, that temporary relief was only wanted, and to no great amount. The interest on those loans amounted to £.13,033: 14: 6¼: the expence of the management to £.8,685: 12: 4: and of consequence, there was a clear profit, from one of the happiest, and best-timed, measures, which the wisdom of government ever adopted, of £.4,348: 2: 2¼. In fact, the alacrity of parliament to support the credit of the country was relief. May 1793 was the epoch of the greatest number of bankruptcies. They greatly decreased, in June; they decreased still more, in July; they continued to decrease, in August; and in September, they fell to be nearly on a par with the numbers, in September 1792. The business was now done\*. The expectation of relief actually created it,

\* I happen to have the following note, which, I believe, is sufficiently accurate to show to what parts of the country the principal relief was granted:

There were granted to

Glasgow	—	—	—	£. 319,730
Leith	—	—	—	25,750
Banff	—	—	—	4,000
Perth	—	—	—	4,000
Dundee	—	—	—	16,000
Edinburgh	—	—	—	4,000
Paisley	—	—	—	31,000

Carried over ——— £. 404,480  
London



it. And, the wise determination of parliament to support both public and private credit quieted apprehensions; and was extremely instrumental, in restoring mutual confidence; as it gave traders time to recollect themselves, and to look for, and use those resources, which are not often wanting to merchants of character and property, in times of commercial difficulties.

In Scotland, the commercial distress, though great, was much less, than in England. If scarcity of gold and silver would make distress, Scotland ought to have had her full share of distress. Though there be some variety of opinions, as to what really is a *banking-house*, in Scotland, it is certain, that the act of parliament\*, for suppressing optional paper and small notes, has introduced into her system, since May 1766, a greater circumspection, which has prevented much mischief†. The great principle,

			Brought over	—	£. 404,480
London	—	—	—	—	989,700
Liverpool,	—	—	—	—	137,020
Manchester,	—	—	—	—	246,500
Bristol —	—	—	—	—	41,500
Other places	—	—	—	—	310,000
					<hr/>
					£. 2,129,200
					<hr/>

\* 5 Geo. III. ch. 47.

† An intelligent friend at Glasgow wrote to me on this subject, as follows:—"The distress began to be felt here, in a few days after it began in London, in the month of February last: but we had no failures till the 28th of March, when the banking-house of Murdoch, Robertson, and Company, were made

principle, and various provisions, of this salutary law, by converting all paper bills into cash notes, which are payable on demand, has been attended with the most salutary consequences.

Scotland was not so much deranged as England, either in her circulation, her manufactures, her trade, or her shipping, during the year 1793. Owing to a more attentive management, her banks were less embarrassed. Her circulation being less checked, its impediments gave fewer interruptions to her manufactures. And, her trade and shipping, being put in motion by all these, were little driven from their usual course, during the storm, which had almost wrecked the commerce, and navigation, of England. Of these exhilarating truths, the following details furnish ample proofs, what-

made bankrupts, for about £. 115,000. This was followed by the banking-house of A. G. and A. Thompsons, who owed about £. 47,000. The first will pay every shilling to their creditors; and it is supposed, that the last will do so also. One or two more of the country banks, in the west of Scotland, were under temporary difficulties, but made no pause; and having got assistance they went on; and, as all the other banks did, drew in their funds, and lessened their engagements. Some of the banks here did certainly continue to discount some bills, but in a less degree than formerly. All of the banks were under the necessity of allowing many of such bills, as they held *to be renewed*, at two or three months date, either in whole, or in part, according to circumstances, which, in fact, was the same thing as a new discount. In this way all our banks have been going on to this hour, by making renewals, when they could not obtain payment, endeavouring to lessen the amount at every renewal; so as gradually to draw in their funds."

ever

ever may have been the temporary embarrassments:

Of linen cloth, there were made for sale, in Scotland, during the years

	Quantity.	Value.
1789 —	19,996,075 yards -	£. 779,608
1790 —	18,092,249 —	722,545
1791 —	18,739,725 —	755,546
1792 —	21,065,386 —	842,544
1793 —	20,676,620 —	757,332

There were exported, by sea, from Scotland, goods of the value, in 1782 - of - £. 653,709  
 in 1786 - of - 914,739  
 in 1789 - of - 1,170,076  
 in 1792 - of - 1,230,884  
 in 1793 - of - 1,024,742

Perhaps a more accurate view of the trade, and shipping, of Scotland may be seen in the subjoined statement, which exhibits the various ships in their several employments:

Years.	Foreign Trade.		Coast Trade.		Fishing Trade.		Total.	
	Ships.	Tons.	Ships.	Tons.	Ships.	Tons.	Ships.	Tons.
1789	793	84,206	958	47,901	381	22,798	2,132	154,905
1790	794	86,823	950	47,688	361	19,898	2,105	154,409
1791	776	85,468	1,058	51,998	388	19,632	2,222	157,098
1792	718	84,027	1,022	50,940	376	19,890	2,116	154,857
1793	698	80,024	1,143	57,318	392	17,973	2,234	155,315
1802	739	94,276	1,151	65,378	603	25,060	2,493	184,564

From

From the foregoing documents I am now induced to infer, that the commercial affairs of Scotland were little embarrassed by the impeded circulation, in 1793, and still less by the commencement of war. And, from this truth, I am inclined to believe that, had not any unusual bankruptcies happened in England, during 1793, from the imprudent management of country banks, her trade and shipping had been little lessened by sudden hostilities.

Happy is it for mankind, that every evil brings its own remedy, unless imprudence step in, to aggravate misfortune, by its reformatations. We have already derived commercial benefits from our commercial derangements. Speculators now see, that there are limits, beyond which, they cannot safely pass. Bankers at length perceive, what indeed required not the help of experience, that by issuing too much paper, they may lose all. Merchants of real capital, and true knowledge, will do more business to more profitable purpose, since traders of no capital, and little moderation, have been forced to give way. Manufacturers have learned, from recent misery, that there are bounds, both to giving and receiving, wages \*. Distrust will be banished from

\* My commercial correspondent at Glasgow, whose sound sense and genuine veracity, I will warrant, wrote to me on the 9th of December 1793, as follows:—

“ The truth is, that most of us are of opinion, that the late stagnation has been exceedingly useful to our trade; and that if it does not proceed too far, it will be attended with the most beneficial



from our island, as those, who stood the test of the late trials, must, like gold in the furnace, be deemed more worthy of confidence. The measure of issuing exchequer bills has at once evinced the alacrity of parliament to support credit, and the good effects, which no vast sum, when prudently applied, can produce on the extended surface of general circulation. And, the whole world has seen with wonder, during the severest trials, that the people of this nation have vast property, exclusive of paper, and unbounded resources, without exhausting their strength.

Never was this exhilarating truth more fully verified than by the events of subsequent times. One of the greatest of these events was the LAPSE of the Bank of England, in February 1797. Panic, and

beneficial consequences to men of real capital: For, previous thereto, the sales were so rapid, the returns so quick, and money so abundant, that much business was established upon little better than mere paper speculation, or circulation alone, which is now at an end. The wages of our labourers, too, had got to such a height, that we must, in all probability, have been gradually undermined in foreign markets, by foreign manufactures; and if this had once occurred, it would have been much more difficult to recover from, than any temporary shock, like the present. Besides, these high wages occasioned much idleness and dissipation; and much of the time of our workmen was consequently spent in ale-houses, where they became politicians, and government-mongers, restless, and discontented. Upon the whole, therefore, we may say with truth, that all, which has hitherto happened, has been for the best."—These judicious observations apply equally to the whole nation.

an impeded circulation, had well nigh ruined the whole country banks of Great Britain, as we have seen, in 1793: and panick; and an impeded circulation, occasioned that *lapse* of the Bank of England, in 1797. An inquiry into the affairs of the Bank now became necessary. That inquiry was minutely made by Committees of the two Houses of Parliament, separately. Every trial of the Bank "only published her better commendation." A thousand facts, and circumstances; were now disclosed to the world, with regard to the wealth, and circulation of the Bank, which were before unknown to the most intelligent persons. It appeared, at length, that the Bank had, undoubtedly, a clear surplus of property, after answering all demands, of £.15,137,690. It was now disclosed, that there was then in circulation, of Bank notes, the commodious amount of £.11,030,110\*. As it was now apparent, that much of that panick had arisen from the artifice of the enemy, the Parliament prohibited payments, by the Bank, in gold, and silver, for a time. The traders immediately came out with declarations of confidence. Every one now ran to receive Bank notes, as if they had been specie. Credit, both public, and private, was again restored. The specie, which had been carried, by fright, into the country, from London, was brought back, by credit, from the country, to London. During the years 1797, and 1798, there were

\* Lords' Report, Appendix, N<sup>o</sup> 10.

imported into this island, as a favourable balance, £.8,000,000 in bullion. After the failure of so many country banks, and the pause of the Bank of England, to have furnished such vast supplies for war, and to have engrossed the trade of the world, are proofs of inexhaustible resources.

If we were now to inquire into the losses of our commerce, during the late hostilities, with so many nations, it would perhaps be found, that the interruptions of circulation, and the derangements of credit, inflicted deeper wounds on our traffic, than the redoubled strokes of the enemy, which, as every war brings some discouragement with it, must be allowed to have made some defalcations from our shipping, and our traffic. And the apparent losses of our trade, both from bankruptcy, and war, may be calculated from the following detail:

Years.	Ships cleared Outwards.			Value of Cargoes:	
	Tons English.	D <sup>o</sup> foreign.	Total.	£:	
In 1785 } 86 } 87 }	1,012,899 - 117,471 - 1,130,370			17,223,37	
1790 } 91 } 92 }	1,329,979 - 163,778 - 1,493,757			22,585,77	
1793	1,240,262	187,032	1,427,294	20,738,588	

Yet, our general traffic, owing to the vast force of its energies, soon regained its former prosperity. It preyed upon the trade of the enemy. We may easily perceive how much of our commerce we owed to  
prize

prize goods, from the following statement of the value thereof, which was imported, and exported—

	Prize Goods imported.		Prize Goods exported.
In 1793	- - £.566,124	—	£.
94	- - 1,115,141	—	1,319,728
95	- - 877,633	—	896,517
96	- - 437,844	—	286,631
97	- - 484,451	—	991,142
98	- - 582,128	—	1,338,344
99	- - 534,874	—	1,120,116
1800	- - 683,097	—	1,611,733

Our enterprize absorbed almost the whole commerce of Europe. And, owing also to those causes, our foreign trade rose, by an energetic increase, from the depression of 1793, amounting to £.20,738,588, to its vast augmentation over the most prosperous years, amounting to £.43,152,019, in 1800\*.

If we add to this vast sum the value of the *imports*, in the same year, the whole value of our *foreign* trade will appear to be no less than £.73,722,624. How to calculate the amount of our domestic trade, I know not: it was always deemed by our old writers, on trade, Petty and Child, Davenant and De Foe, who were as wise as we are, though they had not the same details, to be more than our foreign commerce.

Those facts exhibit, then, such an immense trade, as no other country ever enjoyed, in the undisturbed times of profound peace. If we add to that

\* See the Chronological Table.



vast traffic, the various profits, which are connected with it; the gains of *freights* \*; of the insurances; and of agencies; which were all equally profitable to our traders; we must greatly enlarge our ideas of the vast gains of our commerce, during the late war, which was to exhaust our resources, and to ruin our traffic.

The late war is, gloriously, distinguished by the capture of the enemy's corsairs, and by the ruin of the enemy's fleets. Our shipping were never so protected, or so safe, in any former war; owing to those causes, and to the vastness of the business, the insurances were never made, on such reasonable terms †. When the fleet, which was employed in the

\* Of *British* Ships, there were employed, in Britain,

Inwards.				Outwards.				
		Ships.	Tons.			Ships.	Tons.	
In 1793	—	9,980	—	1,342,952	—	11,175	—	1,240,202
In 1800	—	10,496	—	1,379,807	—	11,868	—	1,445,271

There belonged to Great Britain, of Ships,

		Ships.	Tons.
In 1793	—	12,899	1,367,420
In 1800	—	14,363	1,628,439

† The *subjoined* STATEMENT is a sufficient proof:

PREMIUMS OF INSURANCE from LONDON to  
the East Indies, and China.

1779	£. 6 per cent.	—	1782.	15 Guineas per cent.
1792	January to December,	£. 3 to 3 Guineas;	December.	
		£. 4 and £. 5 per cent.		
1793	January,	£. 4½	2. 5 Guineas;	February and March, 8 Guineas.

the Russian trade, was recently detained in the ports of Russia, the loss of the whole was settled, with

Guineas; April to October, £. 7 a. 7 Guineas; October, &c. 6 Guineas.

### Jamaica.

- 1779 With convoy, 7 to 8 Guineas; without, 15 a. 20 Guineas.  
 1782 8, 10, and 15 Guineas with convoy.—Premiums highest in the beginning of the season.  
 1792 £. 2½ *per cent.*—1793. January, 3 Guineas; February, 5 Guineas, and 7 Guineas; April, 8 Guineas; June, 4 a. 6 Guineas, with convoy.

### Leward Islands.

- 1779 With convoy 7 a. 8 Guineas, without convoy 16 Guineas.  
 1782 From 8 to 12 Guineas with convoy.—Premiums highest in the first part of the season.  
 1793 £. 2.—1793. January, 2½ to 3 Guineas; February, 10 Guineas; March, 5 Guineas, with convoy. 5 Guineas *per cent.* the general rate throughout the season, with convoy.

### Canada.

- 1779 With convoy, 10 Guineas; without convoy, 15 Guineas *per cent.*  
 1782 15 Guineas with convoy.—1792. £. 3 to 3 Guineas, throughout the season,  
 1793 5 to 6 Guineas with convoy.

### American States.

- 1782 15 Guineas with convoy, in general, throughout the season.  
 1792 £. 2 in general. — — Ditto.

with the facility of the common loss of a single ship. This is a transaction of which the Insurers of Britain may boast. The facility, and reasonableness, of the Insurances, during the late war, ought to be added to the unusual profits of that gainful period.

Our trade was not only carried on with an extraordinary degree of success, and profit, but, the surface of our island was improved with uncommon skill, and augmented energy. From the restoration of peace, in 1783, till the commencement of the war, in 1793, domestic meliorations had been carried on, with equal vigour, and suc-

- 1793 January, £. 2; February 4th to 20th, 3 Guineas, 4 Guineas, and 5 Guineas; 23d, 8 Guineas; March, 8 Guineas, and 5 Guineas, American ships only. The general rate throughout the rest of the season, 3 guineas.

### The Baltic.

- 1779  $2\frac{1}{2}$  Guineas with convoy, 5 Guineas without.—1782.  
4 to 5 Guineas with convoy.
- 1792 1 Guinea to St. Petersburg, £.  $1\frac{1}{4}$  to  $1\frac{1}{2}$  to Stettin.
- 1793 March, 3 Guineas with convoy to Stettin; 6 Guineas without.
- April  $2\frac{1}{2}$  Guineas with convoy to St. Petersburg; and 5 Guineas without.
- July, to St. Petersburg, 3 Guineas, to return 1 per cent. if with convoy, which was the general rate throughout the rest of the season. Add to all those details what a very eminent Insurer at Lloyd's Coffee-house has written to me, "that premiums of insurance, in the late war, have been much lower, than they were in the American war."

cess.

cefs. But, during the late war, our domestic improvements have been purfued with ftill greater knowledge, and more ufeul efficacy. We may fee proofs of thefe facts, in the fubjoined

TABLE; fhewing the Number of Acts of Parliament, which paffed, during the *late war* for making Roads and Bridges, &c.; Canals and Harbours, &c.; for Inclofures and Draining, &c.; for Paving and other Parochial Improvements; compared with the eight preceding years.

	1793	1794	1795	1796	1797	1798	1799	1800	Total of 8 Years.	10 <sup>th</sup> 8 Yrs. preceding
Roads, Bridges, &c. -	62	35	36	27	39	41	49	52	341	302
Canals, Harbours, &c.	32	22	13	18	14	7	10	16	132	64
Inclofures, Draining, &c.	62	74	80	76	91	52	66	88	589	245
Paving, and other Parochial Improvements }	15	5	10	8	7	7	4	6	62	139
Total -	171	136	139	129	151	107	129	162	1,124	750

We thus fee, diftinctly, that the active fpirit of domeftic melioration, which exifted, before the war began, continued, with augmented energy, during the progreff of hoftilities. The world will contemplate this enterprize with wonder. Millions, and tens of millions, have been raifed upon the people, for carrying on an interefting war, yet they found money, as they had fkill, and induftry, to improve their ifland. Great Britain, as it has been more improved, during the war, is worth more, at the conclufion of it, than when unprovoked hoftilities



began. And, this happy isle, where the foot of the foe never treads, if it were brought to the hammer, would sell for more, than it would have fetched, at any former period, in proportion to its additional improvements.

Yet, what do all those improvements of the country avail, if the people have not victual to eat? This question would lead us into the wide, and thorny, wilderness of *agricultural reports*. But though I have been, regularly, summoned to contribute a day's labour, in this unweeded garden, I have hitherto been frightened by the toil. I had the honour to receive, some months ago, a circular letter from the Board of Agriculture; soliciting such observations, as I might have to make, with regard to the best mode of preventing future scarcity. But, my various avocations have hitherto prevented me from essaying so arduous a subject.

I will, however, contribute two, or three *truifms*, which may induce some person, who has more leisure, and more skill, than I can command, to add a few more; in the hope, that a regular collection of *truifms* may be formed, on this interesting subject; for, amidst a long continued clamour of contradiction, I have, scarcely, found any two persons, who could agree upon any one position.

1st TRUISM. There have been ten times more agricultural melioration, during the present reign, than in any anterior period\*. Yet, is it, in this reign,

\* The foregoing pages furnish abundant proofs of that position:

reign, that we appear to have lost the export of corn. It would be very absurd logic to maintain, that the surface of our island, in proportion as it is improved, by inclosing, draining, and by every sort of manurance, became less productive. There are two facts, which are incontrovertible, and are very interesting: 1st. During the six-and-thirty years, which ended with 1800, the surface of our island was, continually, improved, beyond all former example, and in the *last* ten years of this period more, than in the *first* ten years: 2dly. With the same six-and-thirty years, our importation of corn began; and has increased the most, towards the conclusion of this long period\*.

2d TRUISM: During the present reign, there have been more skill, more money, and more efficient work, employed, in our agriculture, than in any

sition: but, I will rely on an authority, which will not be disputed. The report of the Committee of the House of Commons, on the waste lands, stated, in 1797,

A Table of the acts of inclosure, with the extent of land inclosed in the following reigns:—

			No. of Acts.		No. of Acres.
In Q. Anne's	—	—	2	—	1,439
In George I.	—	—	16	—	17,660
In George II.	—	—	226	—	318,778
In George III.	—	—	1,532	—	2,804,197

\* The averages in the corn accounts, printed by the order of parliament, on the 14th of November 1800, establish the fact, as to the imports; and the journals of parliament, and the statute book, as to the improvements.

former

former period. By a necessary progress, the nation had become more knowing, more opulent, and more enterprising. The farmers have been better paid, for their pains, in this reign, than in prior times\*. It would be a very absurd argument, then, to maintain, that our fields produce less, as they are better cultivated.

3d TRUISM : This island must, necessarily, produce more victual, in the present reign, than in any former period. From more skill, more expence, and more manurance, the appropriate result must be more product. He, then, would be an absurd reasoner, who, from such premises, should maintain, that more skill, more expence, and more cultivation, must necessarily produce less, upon a medium of seasons.

From those three TRUISMS, there results, in my judgment, a fourth *truism*, though other persons may think, differently, from me upon the point : that all the late struggle, canvassing, and clamour, for a general act of inclosure, are groundless. If the country be in a continual course of improvement, and if this progress of melioration gather energy, as it proceeds, this much-fought-for measure is groundless, in its policy. If a general inclosure act would divert from profitable employments a greater portion of capital, of labour, and of enterprize, than would, otherwise, run into that channel, such an act would introduce an evil, rather

\* The corn accounts printed by the said order of the 14th of November, 1800.

than a good, into our political œconomy. If all interests, however, could be made to concur, there seems to be no other objection to a general inclosure act, except, that the spirit of improvement might slacken, perhaps, if that object were obtained; as lassitude generally follows enjoyment.

From the foregoing *truifms*, I am inclined, strongly, to think, that there is more *viſtual*\* produced, at present, in a *bad* season, than there was, formerly, produced in England, and Wales, during a *good* season †. If we throw into the scale the vast quantity

\* I use the good old English word *viſtual*, as it was used by Shakespeare, and by the parliament, in the reign of Charles II. in a larger sense, than *corn*, as stores for the support of life.

† The greatest surplus of corn, which was ever sent out of this country, was, in the five years, ending with 1754: and which amounted to - - - - - £.1,087,594 qrs.

The quantity of corn, which was imported according to an average of the five years of scarcity, ended with 1799, was - - - - - 1,190,131

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2,277,725

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Now, that quantity would not supply the additional number of people, which enumeration has, at length, found to be 2,830,000, who, yearly, consume one quarter each person, or 2,830,000 qrs. The annual deficiency is no less than 552,272 quarters. Mr. Dirom argues this question, upon the supposition, that each person consumes two quarters; 1st. because he made his estimate not only upon wheat; but, upon oats, rye, barley, malt; andly. because he included, also, the consumption of pastry-makers, and Starch-makers, of poultry, pigs, horses, which are not used in agriculture; and even the brewery and distillery.

The



quantity of potatoes, which are now, annually, grown, more than there were fifty years ago; the balance, will show, that there is raised at present, an infinitely greater quantity of *victual* in *bad* seasons, than there was, fifty years ago, raised, in *good* seasons.

The difficulty, and the distress, of late times, did not arise from our *producing less*, notwithstanding the unfavourable seasons; but from our *consuming more*: in good seasons, we produce infinitely more victual, than was raised in the prosperous years, ending with 1754; perhaps enough, in plentiful years, as we may infer, from the foregoing details: but, we consume much more; as we may learn from the well-known amount of the imports of corn, during recent times. We have 2,830,000 more people, in England and Wales, at present, as we know, from the late enumeration, than there existed, in the same countries, at the epoch of the bounty on corn, in 1689: if each consumer use at least one quarter a year, then, the general consumption of such persons must be 2,830,000 quarters of every sort of grain\*: and, consequently, more than

The fact is, the above statements of the exports, and imports, include all sorts of grain: and, consequently, the estimate of the consumption ought to include every sort of consumer.

\* The Rev. John Howlett says, *Dispersion*, p. 11,—“If  
 “ these additional inhabitants live upon barley, they will each  
 “ require *twelve* bushels a year, instead of *eight* of wheat; if  
 “ upon oats, nearly sixteen bushels.” Mr. Dirom, in his *Corn Tracts*, p. 15, says, “wheat is double the value of the inferior  
 “ grain; I shall throw upon the general consumption of the  
 “ people,

than half a million of quarters beyond the former export, and recent import, of corn, added together, as we have seen. Neither is there included, in this estimate, the starch-making, the pastry, the poultry-meat, the pig-meat, the horse corn, the distillery, the brewery. The consumption is, therefore, not only much greater now, than formerly; but many consumers, who, in less opulent times, eat rye-meal, and oat-meal, now eat flower of wheat. The consumption of the whole body of consumers is not only more expensive, but it is more wasteful, at present, than formerly. A revolution, which has gradually taken place, during the last fifty, or sixty years, has lessened the number of suppliers, and added, largely, to the body of consumers. The cottagers have been driven into villages;

“ people, the grain consumed by horses, which are not employed in agriculture, hogs, poultry, starch-makers, &c. and when it is considered, that a great number of people live chiefly upon the inferior grain, we cannot, under all these circumstances, appropriate less than two quarters of the several sorts of grain, over-hand, to the consumption of each person, upon an average yearly, for bread, beer, spirits, &c.” With those intimations, the well-informed author of the Corn Tracts had already concurred. According to the principles of Mr. C. Smith, [Tracts 18] we may now estimate the whole consumption of England, and Wales, which, the enumeration has assured us, contain 9,330,000 persons.

	Quarters.
Bread corn, at one quarter, each - - - - -	9,330,000
Corn made into drink - - - - -	4,665,000
Corn for cattle, poultry, &c. - - - - -	4,665,000
<hr/>	
The total of home consumption - - - - -	18,660,000
<hr/>	

the

the villagers have been forced into towns; and the townsmen have been enticed into cities: while the cottagers remained in their hamlets, and the villagers in their vicinages, they derived much of their subsistence from the soil, whereon they lived: when they became townsmen, and citizens, they ceased to be partly suppliers, and began to be altogether consumers.

We owe much of this disadvantageous change to our modern system of agriculture. This system, as it has been long practised, has produced the most calamitous effects, without effecting all the salutary consequences, for which it is celebrated. By consolidating farms to an enormous extent; by forcing cottagers from their hamlets; by pretending to make much profit with little labour; the agricultural system has depopulated, and is depopulating the shires, wherein it prevails. This evil, in our political œconomy, has been long suspected: it is now certain. There is not a proposition, in the mathematics, that is more demonstrable, than the position, that the agricultural system depopulates the country\*. The agricultural system attempts to ape the manufacturing

\* The enumeration of 1801, among a thousand other informations, evinces the truth of that position:

	N <sup>o</sup> of Houses in 1690.		Ditto. in 1801.		Decrease.
In Bedfordshire	12,170	—	12,073	—	97
Cambridgeshire	18,629	—	16,451	—	2,178
Essex	40,545	—	39,398	—	1,147
Huntingdon	8,713	—	7,072	—	1,641
Lincoln	45,019	—	42,489	—	2,530
					Norfolk

manufacturing system, which has a quite different tendency. The great aim of the manufacturing system is to produce a better commodity, at a cheaper rate. The constant effect of the agricultural system is to produce a worse commodity, at a dearer rate. While peers sink into peasants: and peasants rise into peers; the great body of the people is pining in want.

There may be politicians, indeed, who, considering money as the chief end of ail policy, may think, that forcing the cottagers into towns, and the villagers into cities, is a good to be desired, rather than an evil to be deplored. Yes, we have had statemen, who laid it down, as a maxim, that modern war is merely an affair of expence. The wealthiest nation, it was naturally presumed, would ultimately be the most triumphant; and

Norfolk	-	-	-	56,579	—	49,140	—	7,439
Rutland	-	-	-	3,661	—	3,361	—	300
Suffolk	-	-	-	47,537	—	32,805	—	14,732

These are all agricultural counties: and, the diminution of the numbers of their houses, during the intervening period, is a sad demonstration how much the agricultural system tends to depopulate the countries, which are comprehended within the circle of its unhappy influence. An equal number of the shires of Scotland, which have been the most improved, by agriculture, have been, in the same manner, depopulated. The ministers of many parishes, in North Britain, point out, in their statistical accounts, the consolidation of farms, the sheep-farming, the driving the people from the hamlets into towns, as the obvious causes of the depopulation of their several parishes. Yet, see The “Observations on the Results of the Population Act 41 Geo. III.” which, from different documents, lead us to very different conclusions.

final



final victory was supposed to be appended to the weightiest purse. We have lived, however, to see a nation arise, who could make conquests, without money; as, indeed, history had, already, recorded the conquests of poverty over riches. Europe has recently seen, that our wealth could not obtain warriors. And we were driven by necessity, or were induced by wisdom, to intrust the safety of our island to the virtuous spirit of our people. Where is that illustrious regiment, which overthrew the invincible phalanx, to find recruits, if sheep be driven into our northern glens, as a more valuable animal than the human race? Where shall our armies obtain the hardiest levies, if the villagers be forced into cities? We may now perceive, that money cannot buy men; that men are of more value than money: the policy, then, which regards riches, as the chief good, must end in the ruin of the state: and that statesman, who should consider the Exchequer, as the only object of his care, would soon be without an Exchequer to care for. From those intimations, we may infer what must be the attentions of the wisest government of the wisest of people.

As I have been asked my opinion, with regard to scarcity, the past, and the future, I will submit my judgment upon this interesting subject. During the war, and the dearth, I was silent, though I did not always approve of what was done, or said. Now, that we have peace, and plenty, I will freely deliver my sentiments, which, to those, who may not recollect, that I am not writing for any party, will,

will, perhaps, appear to be contradictory. It is necessary, in the first place, to lay before the reader, a *Statement of the Prices of Wheat*, according to the audit book of Eton College, from 1685, to 1771, and from this year to 1801, according to the average of the Eton prices, reduced, however, to the statute quarter, and to the middling quality, and of Mr. Catherwood's prices of England and Wales; of the excess of Exports and Imports of Corn, from the year 1696, to 1800, inclusive, including Scotland, after the union; together with the bounties, which were paid, during the several periods, wherein bounties were given: the bounties of the three years, ending with 1691, and those of the five years, ending with 1696, were computed at only the half of what the bounties amounted to, in the subsequent years, when the prices of corn were the same.

A TABLE; Shewing the average Prices of *middling* Wheat, per *statute* quarter; the average Excess of the Exports of every sort of Corn, Flour, and Meal; the average Imports of the same; and the whole Bounties paid on the Corn exported, during the years of the several averages:

PERIODS.	The Prices of Wheat per stat. qr.	The excess of Exports.	The excess of Imports.	The Bounties paid.
	s. d.	Quarters.	Quarters.	£.
3 Years Average, ending with 1683 -	27 4	—	—	None.
3 years D <sup>o</sup> ending 1691 -	26 —	—	—	66,600
5 years D <sup>o</sup> ending 1696 -	47 9	—	—	60,000
5 years D <sup>o</sup> ending 1701 -	42 8	139,866	—	26,773
6 years D <sup>o</sup> ending 1707 -	25 11	289,304	—	310,087
4 years D <sup>o</sup> ending 1711 -	49 9	299,367	—	192,533
4 years D <sup>o</sup> ending 1715 -	37 8	453,986	—	288,501
4 years D <sup>o</sup> ending 1719 -	33 1	485,852	—	248,192
5 years D <sup>o</sup> ending 1724 -	28 10	532,732	—	388,204
5 years D <sup>o</sup> ending 1729 -	37 7	216,643	—	286,829
5 years D <sup>o</sup> ending 1734 -	25 9	468,844	—	445,496
5 years D <sup>o</sup> ending 1739 -	30 10	597,462	—	576,550
5 years D <sup>o</sup> ending 1744 -	28 7	446,378	—	396,941
5 years D <sup>o</sup> ending 1749 -	27 9	932,593	—	775,137
5 years D <sup>o</sup> ending 1754 -	30 5	1,080,077	—	964,340
5 years D <sup>o</sup> ending 1759 -	36 2	273,805	—	354,332
5 years D <sup>o</sup> ending 1764 -	30 7	676,117	—	703,170
5 years D <sup>o</sup> ending 1769 -	43 2	—	233,184	156,505
5 years D <sup>o</sup> ending 1774 -	47 9½	—	276,206	24,036
5 years D <sup>o</sup> ending 1779 -	40 9	—	290,595	193,225
5 years D <sup>o</sup> ending 1784 -	45 9½	—	185,906	167,764
5 years D <sup>o</sup> ending 1789 -	43 3	—	198,716	268,148
5 years D <sup>o</sup> ending 1794 -	47 2	—	1,145,584	106,544
5 years D <sup>o</sup> ending 1799 -	63 5½	—	1,191,131	138
The one year - - 1800 -	113 4	—	2,259,379	<u>7,000,045</u>

The epoch of the *bounty* on corn is 1689. In my copy of the Statutes, the bounty is called a *reward* to *persons exporting* corn\*. The price of middling wheat, at that epoch, according to a five years average, ending with 1689, was 28*s.* 9*d.* a statute quarter. A long period of fine seasons had reduced the market value to that low price. And this low price, and those fine seasons, induced the parliament to pass the before-mentioned act, “for encouraging the exportation of corn”; when wheat should be at 48*s.* or under. The value of money was, at that epoch, in the ratio of 226, in 1689, to 562, in 1800†; and, of consequence, £. 1. in 1689, had as much power over the necessaries of life, as £. 2. 9*s.* 8¼*d.* had, in 1800.

The fine seasons did not continue long. The seasons, however, were so far favourable, in 1690, and 1691, as to reduce the prices below the average of 28*s.* 9*d.* notwithstanding the bounty, and the act encouraging exportation. The seasons changed from good to bad, in 1692; and continued extremely unfavourable till 1702, when the price fell below the average of 28*s.* 9*d.* Those times were long remembered, as the *dear* years of the Revolution, when the price of *middling* wheat rose to 56*s.* the *statute* quarter, in 1696. We have had no such scarcity,

\* 1 Wm. & Mary, ch. 12.

† See Sir George Shuckburgh Evelyn’s interesting, and important, *Table of the appreciation of money, in the Transactions of the Royal Society*, 1798, p. 176.



and dearth, during late times. The fine seasons returned in 1702, and continued till 1708. Two, or three, unfavourable seasons carried up the prices of wheat to 62s. in 1709, and to 61s. 7d. in 1710. The high prices of 1800, considering the depreciation of money, were not so high, as those of 1709 and 1710. A long course of favourable seasons now succeeded; and continued, with very little interruption, till 1756 and 1757, when the price of middling wheat rose to 47s. 4d. the statute quarter, which, having a regard to the depreciation of money, was still under the low price of 1689. At length clamour, and tumult, began; which have continued, during bad seasons, till the present times.

Some insist, that the bounties have fructified our fields: some, that they have not prevented the return of bad seasons, nor benefited our farmers, in good seasons. The late Dr. Adam Smith maintained that, without benefiting the farmers, the bounty did harm, to the great body of the people, in two respects; it raised the price, in the home market; and it transferred vast sums of money, at the most distressful times, from the purses of the consumers, to the pockets of the jobbers\*. The Reverend John Howlett, with as sound a head as Doctor Smith, and more facts before his eyes, cannot see "the beneficial operation of the bounty †." There

\* Wealth of Nations, v. ii. p. 266.

† The Dispersion of Gloomy Apprehensions, 1797, p. 22.

is a curious circumstance, which neither of those quick-sighted writers, distinctly, saw: Till the corn act of 1791, there was no proper mode prescribed by law, for ascertaining the prices of grain\*. The customers, who computed the bounty, at the custom-house, and the brokers, who received it, understood each other: but, neither the growers of corn, nor the consumers, knew the prices of grain, except the price of the narrow market, wherein they dealt. Neither did the king, and parliament, during former reigns, know the general prices of grain, except from the noise, and tumult, of the needy. Now, those facts, not only confirm the reasonings of Smith, and Howlett, but evince, that the bounty went directly from the pockets of the consumers into the purses of the brokers, yet without benefiting the growers. From the first establishment of the bounty till its recent cessation, owing to natural causes, upwards of seven millions of money have been paid by the public, not for a *good* purpose, but for a *bad* purpose. It has, moreover, created a continued contest, by a struggle between avarice, and want. And, to the scandal of the better judgment of the nation, a *probable good* has been allowed, for more than a century, to outface two *positive evils*: the *probable good* was the supposed fructification of our fields: the two *positive evils* were the payment of seven millions of money, for

\* The register of corn prices began, indeed, in 1771; but, it was inadequate to its end.

making corn dearer in the home market, without contributing to the manurance of the soil \*.

The struggle, and perseverance, in promoting the export of the produce of agriculture, in former times, appears quite wonderful to the harassed eyes of the present days. The dear years of the Revolution began, in 1692. The prices of grain rose to the greatest height, in 1696. They continued very high till 1699, when they began to abate, till the better seasons returned, in 1700. The export of corn was prohibited, in 1699, for one year †. The bounty was, soon afterwards, withdrawn, from the 9th of February, 1699, to the 20th of September, 1700 ‡. And, the duties, which were payable on the export of victual was repealed, for ever, in 1700 §. From those facts, it is apparent, that the king, and parliament, in those days, either did not know

\* By the corn act of 1773, the original bounty price of 48s. a quarter of wheat was reduced to a rate under 44s.; and this reduced rate was continued by the corn act of 1791. But, the 20 G. 3. ch. 31, seemed to introduce a new principle, when it allowed only one half of the bounty on corn, exported in neutral ships.

† By 10 Wm. ch. 3. By 10, 11, Wm. ch. 4. the distillery was stopped, for a season.

‡ By 11 Wm. ch. 1.—All those alleviations came, after the evil day had passed.

§ By 11, 12, Wm. ch. 20.—During that reign too, there was passed “An Act for the encouragement of the breeding and feeding of cattle.” 3 Wm. & M. ch. 8. The great ob-  
ject

know the state of the prices, or did not feel, for the miseries of the poor, with the same pungency, as the king, and parliament, feel at present. The years 1709, and 1710, were times of greater dearths, though perhaps of less calamity, than those of king William's reign. The only anodyne, which was applied, in those two years, was the measure of preventing the export of corn, for one year, without withdrawing the bounty \*. There was very little grain imported, during those two periods of severe dearths. And, this fact seems to evince, that the prevailing passion for export, on both those sad occasions, drove the consumers to rigid œconomy, which, generally, is the best resource.

A long course of favourable seasons prevented the return of dearth till 1740, which was not comparable to the dear years of king William, and queen Anne. The export of corn was, however, stopped, in 1741. The same measure was adopted, in 1757, when a worse season, in the preceding year, occasioned a louder outcry, and greater tumult. The outcry, and the tumult, and the alarm, rose to a greater height, during the unfavourable seasons of

ject of this encouragement, which was given at the commencement of the dear years, consisted, in taking off the duties on the *exportation* of all the products of agriculture. I do not observe, that any measure was taken, during the nine years of want, to stop the exportation, or to repeal this act, giving a reward, for raising the prices of the products of agriculture, in the home market.

\* By the 8 Anne, ch. 2.



1765, 1766, 1767, though neither the nominal, nor the real, prices of victual were equal to those of the times of queen Anne, or king William. It was this clamour of contradiction, which induced ingenious men to attribute the apparent prices, and subsequent distress, to *the depreciation of money*. Montesquieu, and Hume, had already talked of the effect of riches, and luxury, upon the necessities of life. But, it was Soame Jenyns, who long sat at the Board of Trade, who professedly inculcated, "that the present high price of provisions" [1766] arises, principally, from the poverty of "the public; and the wealth of individuals\*." But, as he knew not how to calculate the depreciation of money, he was unable to apply it, specifically, to his point.

The passion, which had so long contrived *ways and means*, for *exporting* the necessities of life, was at length met by a contrary passion. And, from 1766, to 1773, encouragements were, continually, offered, for the importation of the necessities of life †. This importation, and that passion, continued to the present times. The year 1796 is the

\* In his *Thoughts on the Causes, and Consequences, of the present high Price of Provisions*; Doddsley, 1767, 8vo. He was, immediately, answered, by a pamphlet, abusing all the servants of the public, who were the very persons, that suffered the most, from *the depreciation of money*.

† By the various acts of parliament, in those times. The obvious change, in the current of the corn trade, may be traced back not only to the bad seasons, but, to those parliamentary acts.

epoch of the bounty on the *importation* of victual\*. This first essay cost the nation £. 565,802. The unfavourable seasons, and the continued fright, gave rise to greater, and more various bounties, on the *importation* of victual †. This second essay has already intercepted, in its course to the exchequer, no less than £. 1,251,479. Of victual, there was imported, in 1800, as we have seen, 2,259,379, statute quarters. Such are the effects of carrying policy to extremes: in one period, *exportation* was too much *rewarded*: in another, *importation* was too much *forced*. The people——

——“Feel by turns the bitter change

“Of fierce *extremes*, *extremes* by change more fierce.

In the mean time, something like a *corn system* was adopted, in 1773, by regulating the export, and import, of grain, according to given prices‡. Yet, was that system said “to be founded on radical mistakes §.” During the subsequent eighteen years, the *corn laws* were involved in a complete chaos. The ablest lawyers in England could not say, distinctly, by what law the exports, and imports, of grain were to be regulated. In this state of legal anarchy, one of the greatest statesmen, whom this country has ever produced, undertook the ar-

\* 36 Geo. 3. ch. 21.

† 39, 40 Geo. 3. ch. 29. 41 Geo. 3. ch. 10.

‡ 13 Geo. 3. ch. 43.

§ Mr. Young's Pol. Arithmetic, p. 40.

duous task of drawing order from confusion. All the elaboration of diligence, and all the wisdom of experience, were now employed, in forming the Corn Act of 1791\*. Yet, alas! what is the wisdom of the wise. A continued succession of unfavourable seasons has rendered nugatory the judicious regulations of that systematic law.

During more than half a century, we have been stunned with controversy about *the corn laws*, which seem to be abrogated, by a higher power than parliament. “The grand, and leading, error, upon this subject, seems to be,” says the Rev. John Howlett, “that we ascribe too much to human contrivance; and too little to providential superintendence†.” When this able man made this deep remark, he had before him many facts. When the late Dr. Smith argued this question, he could only see, with systematic eyes, *the disparagement of silver*. After viewing the whole operation of the corn laws, with a very acute intellect, Mr. Howlett‡ “thought it manifest, that the various *changes* in our *corn laws* are so far from having been the only, or even any considerable, cause of the decrease of our exports (of corn,) that there is no necessity for supposing, they have been any cause at all.” With this opinion, I

\* 31 Geo. 3. ch. 30. This act, however, was not, finally, passed, as it had been, originally, proposed. See the notes on p. 40, 41, of the *Corn Representation*, lately printed for Stockdale.

† His Dispersion, 1797, p. 21.

‡ Id.

concur. After a long consideration of the *corn-accounts*, which were printed by order of parliament, in November 1800, and weighing collateral circumstances, it appears to me, that the seasons, either good, or bad, have been the efficient causes of plenty, or scarcity, from the epoch of the exportation bounty to the present times. After fully considering this interesting subject, the series of corn-laws appeared to me, like continued attempts to regulate the seasons. In the weighty consideration of supplying the necessities of life, there are two points, which are beyond the power of parliament: the legislature cannot regulate the course of the seasons; neither can the legislature controul the subtle, and silent, depreciation of money, which seems to have the all-powerful force of *steam*: the effect of unfavourable seasons may be mitigated, by the best system of agriculture: the unhappy influence of the depreciation of money may be mollified, by the rigid œconomy of individuals.

Thus much, then, with regard to *the bounty*, and to *the corn-laws*: I will now speak of the recent dearths, which proceeded from various causes. The principal cause was, undoubtedly, a long series of unfavourable seasons. We have, as I have already shown, not only a greater number of people to feed; but, a greater number of opulent, and wasteful people to feed; owing to the favourable change in the circumstances of a great many people. In the mean time, the whole necessities of life were sold upon the principles of *concert*.

From



From Cornwall to Cathness, there is an understanding among the fellers, who never forget, that the consumers are wholly in their power. And, by means of this understanding, and of that concert, there is not a free market in Britain, where the balance of supply, and demand, can vibrate, without the interruptions of avarice. Some of those evils have been attributed to the banks. It has been urged, that the paper of the bank of England has greatly contributed to raise the prices of corn, and cattle. The abstract position is obviously absurd: and, the arguments, which have been given, in support of that absurdity, I have always considered, as nonsensical. If it had been argued, that the discounts of the bank promote circulation; that circulation encourages industry; that industry energizes agriculture, manufacture, commerce; that all these create wealth, that wealth engenders luxury; that luxury creates consumption; and that consumption affects the prices; I should have admitted these several deductions to be so many *truths*: But, it is not true, in point of fact, that the paper of the bank of England ever comes into direct contact with prices, though they may, after a long course of circulation. It seems, however, certain, that the country banks furnish *accommodations* to farmers: yet, have not farmers the same right to the benefits of *accommodations*, as merchants, and other tradesmen, have, to discounts, and advances, and other commercial resources. The talk about paper money, on this occasion, is only

only an outcry, that we are an opulent, and free-spending people!

Whether the late war has had any great influence on prices has been doubted by some, and denied by others. There is, scarcely, a paradox, that some philosophers have not maintained. Some of our political œconomists have closely followed their tract, in the paradoxical line. One truth is clear: it was not the *word* war, nor the *thing*, which raised the prices, in the domestic market: but, our fleets, and our armies, have large mouths, that must be supplied: and when the public agents go into the market, with additional demands, the prices must necessarily rise; since the price is governed by the demand, and the supply. If there should be an additional demand, and a less supply, during seasons of scarcity, the public agents must, undoubtedly, raise the prices, in a high degree. But, some other effects of war contributed to enhance the prices still more. When the assessed taxes, and the income tax, were collected, the suppliers of the necessaries of life contrived to impose their proportion of those taxes on the consumers, in the prices of the necessary articles. The public agents have withdrawn from the markets: yet, the consequences of the war affect the consumers, during the enjoyment of peace.

This intimation leads to a slight consideration of *the depreciation of money*. The mean appreciation, from 1689, the epoch of the export bounty on corn,

corn, to 1800, is, in the ratio of 226 to 562, nearly \*: now, the result is, that £. 1. in 1689, had as great a power over the necessaries of life, as £. 2. 9s. 8½d. had, in 1800. From the same *appreciation*, there is another result. According to a five years average, ending with 1689, the price of middling wheat, per statute quarter, was £. 1. 8s. 8½d. : now, this sum had as great a power over the necessaries of life, as £. 3. 11s. 5d. in 1800: and the average price of five dear years, ending with 1799, was only £. 3. 3s. 5½d. : so that this *high* price of five *dear* years, was not so large as the *low* price of middling wheat, in the five *plentiful* years, ending with 1689. From the foregoing results, we may infer, that the dear years of recent times were not equal in dearnefs, and misery, to the dear years of a century before. The depreciation of money, according to Sir George Shuckburgh Evelyn's table, from 1696 to 1800, was in the ratio of 234.52 to 562, nearly : so that £. 1. in 1696, was equal, in power to £. 2. 7s. 11d. in 1800: and, of consequence, the average price of wheat, in the very dear year 1696, was equal to £. 6. 14s. 2d. in the very dear year 1800. The depreciation, according to the same curious, and important, *table*, from 1710 to 1800, was in the ratio of 247½ to 562, nearly: so that £. 1 in 1710 was equal in

\* See Sir George Shuckburgh Evelyn's *Table of the appreciation of money*, in the Transactions of the Royal Society, 1798, p. 176.

energy to £. 2. 5s. 5d. in 1809: now, the average price of the quarter of middling wheat, in 1709, was £. 3. 2s. which, in power over necessaries, was equal to £. 7. 0s. 9½d. in 1800. It is, therefore, demonstrable, that the dearth, and distress, of recent times, were not equal to the dearth, and distress, of the several reigns of king William, and queen Anne. Under Providence, we owe the favourable difference of late times to the better state of our agriculture; proceeding from that gradual progress of improvement, which has been traced, during the two last centuries; and which has doubled in its progress, during the present reign, and has redoubled its many meliorations, during the last six and thirty years.

This subject of the *depreciation of money* is so interesting to the *state*, to the governed, as well as to the governors; that I will presume to exhibit it, in a different light. By a parliamentary arrangement, in 1760, the civil list revenue was compensated, by an annuity of £. 800,000; his Majesty having graciously offered to relinquish his hereditary revenues, in consideration of an equivalent. It is a parliamentary principle, which has been long settled, that whoever, whether the prince, or the peasant, relinquishes any rights, for the benefit of the public, shall receive a full compensation. On that principle, was the said annuity of £. 800,000 settled, by parliament, on his Majesty, in lieu of his hereditary revenues\*. Upon that annuity, the depreciation

\* 1 Geo. 3. ch. 1. The historian of our revenue does not distinctly



ation of money attached, as it equally attaches upon all other annuities. It was found necessary, therefore, in 1777, to bring the arrears of the civil list before the parliament, for its just consideration. The civil list debt was paid: and the said annuity was enlarged to £.900,000, without any very minute calculation, whether £.900,000, in 1777, had the same power over the necessities of life, as £.800,000 had, in 1760. The depreciation of money, from 1760 to 1800, according to the important *Table*, before-mentioned, was in the ratio of 342 to 562: so that £. 1, in 1760, could command as many of the necessities of life, as £. 1. 12s. 10d. in 1800: and, consequently, an annuity of £.800,000, in 1760, was equal, in its faculties, to an annuity of £.1,314,619. 17s. 7½d. in 1800. Such, then, are some of the effects of the depreciation of money, which, as they are subtle, and silent, cannot be easily

tingly state that arrangement, which comprehends the royal grace, and the parliamentary engagement. The learned Baronet, however, recapitulates the various sums, which, from time to time, have been paid, in supplementary aid, of the civil list; and, at length, infers, that the total, during the space of twenty-eight years, amounts to £.923,196, *per annum*. Sir J. Sinclair's *Hist. of the Public Revenue*, vol. 3. p. 72. But, his sagacity seems not to have perceived, that the depreciation of money was outrunning the annuity; and his algebra did not discover, by computation, that £.923,196, in 1786, were not equal, in power of purchase, to £.800,000, in 1760: in fact, according to the *Table*, and the principles, before mentioned, an annuity of £.900,000 was equal, in its energies, during the year 1760, to an annuity of £.1,478,947. 7s. 4d. in 1800. Now, *the Mathematics* cannot be outfaced by confidence, nor out-argued by declamation!

foreseen,

foreseen, and cannot be wholly prevented. Such also were some of the effects of the sixth great war, in which Britain has been engaged, since the Revolution of 1688. It is one of the principal objects of the foregoing Estimate to state the losses of her trade, from each of those wars. And, we have beheld, with wonder, and comfort, that our shipping, and commerce, have been invariably more extensive, at the return of each successive peace, than during each preceding period of tranquillity. It has been observed, also, that in proportion as the people of the British dominions became more enlightened, more industrious, and more opulent, they equally became more able to meet the misfortunes of business, and to bear the embarrassments of war.

The events, which occurred during the late war, as well as in the period preceding, are proofs of that position. It must, indeed, be allowed, that individuals, and classes, were pressed down, by inequalities, which, however unable they are to bear burdens, cannot easily be foreseen, nor always avoided. The first effects of war, in our happy island, which never feels the ravages of the foe, are new debts, and additional taxes. Every year of hostilities brings with it some fresh loan, with appropriate subsidies, to fund it. But, it will answer, sufficiently, our present purpose, since the war ended, in October 1801, to give a general view of the financial result, from that long course of hostilities, as it affected the burdens, and comforts of the people. The whole amount of the public expenditure of *Great Britain*,  
 † Z during

during the *ten* years, ending on the 5th of January 1803, and comprising the whole period of the war, which was terminated by *the peace of Amiens*, may be stated at £. 503,378,540; whereof £. 178,520,454 arose from the charge of the funded, and unfunded debts of the state, and £. 324,858,086, from all other services: About £. 241,909,953 were raised, by *the ordinary revenue*, and *incidental payments* of various kinds; about £. 32,679,000 were raised by extraordinary *war taxes*; there were provided £. 220,095,607, by *additions to the funded debt* of the public; £. 3,000,000 by an *advance from the Bank*, without interest, in consideration of the renewal of its charter; and £. 3,000,000 advanced by the Bank, in 1798, whereof £. 1,500,000 were repaid, in 1803. Such were the provisions, for the vast expenditure of the war of 1793, which ended, in October 1801! But, it is of great importance to remark that, if the sum, which was raised by the war taxes, previously to the peace, had been added to the loan of each year, *a further charge* would have been incurred of £. 48,678,000 capital stock, and £. 1,850,000 annual charge, at the rate whereat such loans were actually raised, in every year: and if such loans so augmented, had been raised, at the average rate of the three years, which immediately preceded the imposition of such war taxes, a further charge would have been incurred of £. 15,296,000 capital stock, and of £. 1,812,000, annual charge; making in the whole an addition of £. 63,974,000, capital debt, and £. 3,662,000 annual charge, which must have been raised, by permanent taxes. It is not easy to  
settle,

settle, whether the minister, who proposed those *war taxes*, which were so important to the nation, or the parliament, who adopted them, or the people, who bore them, be entitled to the highest honour.\*

Of public debts, whether funded, or unfunded, the true anodyne is a sinking-fund. This remedy has existed in our *Dispensary*, since the year 1717, by the original appropriation of £.323,434. Yet, has not this anodyne always been administered, with the attention, and success, which were due to its efficacy. The powers of a sinking-fund, however recommended by publication, were almost forgotten, when it was adopted, as we have seen, under happier auspices, at the end of seventy years†. A sinking fund of £.250,000 a quarter, was settled by

\* It may gratify a reasonable curiosity, to see a *comparative state* of the prices of the 3 per cent. consols, in each month of the four following years; comparing two years of previous peace, with two years of subsequent war:

	Peace.		War.	
	1784	1785	1800	1801
January	—	—	—	—
February	—	—	—	—
March	—	—	—	—
April	—	—	—	—
May	—	—	—	—
June	—	—	—	—
July	—	—	—	—
August	—	—	—	—
September	—	—	—	—
October	—	—	—	—
November	—	—	—	—
December	—	—	—	—
	55 $\frac{6}{8}$	55 $\frac{3}{8}$	62	59 $\frac{4}{8}$
	56 $\frac{1}{8}$	55 $\frac{6}{8}$	61 $\frac{5}{8}$	56 $\frac{1}{8}$
	58 $\frac{1}{8}$	55 $\frac{2}{8}$	63	56 $\frac{3}{8}$
	58 $\frac{6}{8}$	56 $\frac{1}{8}$	63 $\frac{7}{8}$	59
	58 $\frac{1}{8}$	58 $\frac{2}{8}$	64 $\frac{3}{8}$	60 $\frac{6}{8}$
	58 $\frac{4}{8}$	57 $\frac{7}{8}$	64 $\frac{3}{8}$	60 $\frac{3}{8}$
	57 $\frac{3}{8}$	57 $\frac{4}{8}$	63 $\frac{6}{8}$	59 $\frac{5}{8}$
	56 $\frac{5}{8}$	57 $\frac{7}{8}$	63	59 $\frac{7}{8}$
	55 $\frac{4}{8}$	58 $\frac{7}{8}$	65 $\frac{6}{8}$	59 $\frac{3}{8}$
	54 $\frac{7}{8}$	63	64 $\frac{6}{8}$	67 $\frac{3}{8}$
	55 $\frac{1}{8}$	68	64 $\frac{1}{8}$	67 $\frac{7}{8}$
	55 $\frac{5}{8}$	71 $\frac{5}{8}$	62 $\frac{7}{8}$	67 $\frac{7}{8}$

† See before p. 179—183.



law, in 1786. The energies of this quarterly sum was strengthened, in 1792, by a grant of £. 400,000, and to this great addition, was superadded, in every subsequent year, £. 200,000. At the end of the sixth year, it had, with these helps, acquired, for the state, of public debts to the amount of £. 9,441,850. It had thus outrun, in this short period, the calculations of malignant science £. 2,649,237. The objection to those salutary measures, which struck the apprehensions of men the most, was the intimation, that the first distresses of war would convert the sinking-fund into one of the *ways and means* of the year. This apprehension was removed by a parliamentary declaration, in 1792, that every new loan, in future, should carry its own sinking-fund along with it.\* The sinking-fund had now shewn its energies; the people had felt its benefits; and the parliament had wisely augmented its powers, and provided for its continuance.

The hostilities of 1793, as they demanded a new loan, also created, under the late declaration, a new sinking-fund. In the same manner, every loan, during that war, was accompanied by its own provision, for its repayment. The world now saw great examples of the privations of the people, and of the magnanimity of parliament, in adhering to previous engagements, for supporting public credit. The publicity of all those measures added much to their success. The public debts were, from time to

\* By the act 32 G. 3. ch. 55, which invigorated the 26 G. 3. ch. 31; and which strengthened the old, by laying the foundation of a new sinking-fund.

time, computed, and ascertained. The applications of the sinking-fund, its past appropriations, and future powers, were inquired into, by a parliamentary committee. At the epoch of that inquiry, in 1797, it was found that,

The *old* sinking-fund of 1786

amounted, yearly, to - - £.1,941,320. 6s. 2d.

The *new* sinking-fund of the

war, to - - - - - 1,418,479. os. od.

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The amount of both to £.3,359,799 6s. 2d.

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The *first* was then operating

on the old debt of - - - - £. 240,000,000.

The *second* was operating on

the new debt of - - - - - 130,665,896.

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It now became apparent, from calculation, that the *old* sinking-fund, with all its supplementary aids, had *less* power of redemption over the *old* debt, than the *new* sinking-fund had over the *new* debt. And, it was equally demonstrable, that the whole debt of £. 240,000,000, might possibly be redeemed, in thirty-three years, from the 1st of February, 1797; and could not be of longer redemption than fifty-four years, from the same epoch.\*

The encouragements, arising from those intimations, seem only to have created desires of giving

\* The Report of the Finance Committee, printed the 31st of March, 1797.

more energies to powers, which were already powerful. The *income tax* was granted, in 1798, as a *contribution, for carrying on a necessary war*\*: a similar *income tax* was granted, in 1799, but on different principles, and with dissimilar views†. At the same time, and with analogous purposes, the land-tax was sold; and the purchase money was transferred to the redemption of debts. In this manner was created, a *third* sinking-fund, which, in its energies, was still more powerful than either of the former. By the redemption of the land-tax, £.21,147,888 stock were transferred to the commissioners of the sinking-fund, who thus acquired the dividends, as the efficacious means of buying additional debts. By an obvious departure from its original design, the *income tax* was dedicated to the payment of £.56,445,000 from the conclusion of the war, in 1801, to the end of the year 1811: this then, is a sinking-fund of £.5,644,500 a year, for ten years‡.

By those various operations, since 1786, for the speedy diminution of the national debts, the effects have been as great, as wise men foresaw, from the energies of such powerful machinery. Before the 1st of February, 1801, there had been redeemed of the old debt £.52,183,364, and of the annuities £.123,477; whereby the principal of the old debt had been reduced from £.238,231,248, to £.186,047,884, and the annuities to £.1,250,073.

\* By 38 G. 3. ch. 16.

† 39 G. 3. ch. 13.

‡ Com. Journ. 22 June, 1801.

And, before the 1st of February, 1804, the sinking-fund commissioners had redeemed, of the *whole* debt, £. 100,901,854. the dividends whereof, continually, form new means of redemption. The sinking-fund, in 1786, was about 1,238th part of the capital permanent debt; the sinking-fund, in 1793, was about 1-160th part of the same debt; and estimating the sinking-fund, in 1801, at £. 5,500,000, this amount would be about 1-73d part of the permanent debt, in 1801\*. The sinking-fund, in 1804, may be estimated at nearly £ 6,500,000. There fell in to the same fund, by the gradual effluxion of time, on the 5th of January, 1808, annuities for years, exclusive of annuities for lives, amounting to £. 458,409. 18s. 1d. †. As an account, between the exchequer, and the stock-exchange, this is a very splendid statement, which does high honour to the wisdom of the parliament, and to the patience of the people.

During all those operations of finance, and of war, the gains of our enterprising people were beyond calculation, however the unproductive classes may have suffered, from the depreciation of money, and the pressures of taxation. Our commerce became more than double to its greatest extent, during the happiest years of previous peace. We added meantime many ships to our ancient stock. And, above all those inducements of comfort, we improved the surface of our island, during the pressures of war, and the infelicities of seasons, far beyond the greatest enterprizes of the most prosperous times; as we have already seen from the statute book. We have already

\* Com. Journ. 22 June, 1801.

† Finance Report, 1786, App. N° 5.



perceived, that upon the return of every peace, after a long course of hostilities, our commerce flows, with unwonted abundance, and our shipping move, with augmented numbers. What had always happened, at the conclusion of every former war, occurred again, at the return of peace, in 1801: And, we never had so many shipping, and such numerous cargoes, as we advantageously enjoyed, in 1802; as the subjoined details will clearly evince, by a retrospective comparison: There were,

Average of years.	Ships cleared outwards.				
	Tons Eng.	Tons foreign.	Total.	Val. of Cargoes.	
In 1772 } 73 } 74 }	795,943	- 64,232	- 680,175	£. 15,613,003	
1790 } 91 } 92 }	1,329,979	- 163,778	- 1,493,757	- 22,585,771	
1801	1,190,557	- 767,816	- 1,958,373	- 42,100,832	
1802	1,459,689	- 435,427	- 1,895,116	- 46,120,962	

The whole number of ships, in the British dominions, which was registered, on

	Ships.	Tons.	Men.
Sept. 30, 1792, was	16,079	— 1,540,145	— 118,286
Sept. 30, 1802, - -	20,568	— 2,128,055	— 154,530
The intermediate increase, during the late war - - - - - }	4,489	— 587,910	— 36,244

The Revenue of the Post-office, which has been justly regarded, as a supplementary proof of the prosperity of our trade, throughout the whole course

course of the late extended war, continued to yield abundantly, from the augmented correspondence; and it continued to yield still more, on the return of peace, from the increase of our trade, and the enlargement of our intercourse.\*

Such, then, was the prosperous state of this country, at all those epochs of peace, and of war, and of renewed peace, at the final conclusion of eight years of unexampled hostilities. Every intimation, indeed, evinces, that the resources of a nation, which possesses all the means of acquiring wealth, agriculture, manufactures, commerce, shipping; are almost inexhaustible. The vast wealth of Britain has been obtained, by industry, amidst wars, taxes, and debts. One of the great objects of this estimate is to trace the progress of all those; and to show their striking effects: And, the invigorating result is, that every war, as the experience of six long wars has demonstrated, left the people more industry, more manufactures, more commerce, and more wealth, than they enjoyed, at the commencement of each. Why, then, should *doubt* embitter the enjoyments of the present, or *apprehension* make us fear, for the suc-

\* From the General Post-office, there were paid into the Exchequer,

in 1791—	£. 325,500 ;	—in 1792—	£. 340,484 ;
1793—	384,000 ;	—in 1794—	392,000 ;
1795—	421,000 ;	—in 1796—	442,000 ;
1797—	500,000 ;	—in 1798—	632,000 ;
1799—	683,000 ;	—in 1800—	699,000 ;
1801—	716,000 ;	—in 1802—	935,000 :

cess

cess of the future. Thus, knowledge, gained by trial, and practice, may induce us to cry out, with the poet,

- " Britain, the queen of isles, our fair possession,
  - " Secur'd by nature, laughs at foreign force:
  - " Her ships her bulwark, and the sea her dyke;
  - " Sees commerce in her lap, and braves the world!"
-

## CHAP. XV.

*The Peace of Amiens had a very short Duration.—*

*The War of 1803.—The Strength of the United Kingdom, at that Epoch;—From its Consolidation, by the Union;—from its Populousness;—from the Number of its Fighting Men;—from its Shipping;—from its Navy;—from its permanent Revenue;—from its War Taxes:—Its Domestic Improvements:—Its Corn Trade.—State of England.—State of Scotland.—State of Ireland.—The Losses of their Trade, from the War.—Of their Circulation.—The Bank of England.—Exchanges.—The general Prosperity, amidst malignant Hostilities.*

THE peace of Amiens, which had been desired by the nation; which had been approved by the parliament; and which had brought respite to all; was, however, of short continuance. The repose, short as it was, which it brought, was of great importance to the people, and the public. It was perhaps an object of still greater moment, to satisfy all parties, from actual experience, that with such a nation, and such a government, it is impossible to preserve, for any length of time, an advantageous peace.

After a feverish truce of a twelvemonth, we were compelled, by necessity, to enter, in 1803, into the seventh great war, since the Revolution. After all  
the



the exertions of the long course of hostilities, which had just been closed, the nation was never more able, or ardent, for the renewal of warfare. The islands of Great Britain, Ireland, Man, Guernsey, Jersey, and Sark, contained three millions of fighting men, who were animated by a sense of their rights, and their wrongs, and invigorated by freedom.

The population of Great Britain, as found by enumeration, in 1801, is - 10,942,646

Of which, one-fifth is the

fighting men - - -	2,188,529
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The population of Ireland

was estimated, during

the Union, at - - -	4,000,000
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The fighting men -	800,000
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The whole people of the

United Kingdom are - 14,942,646

Of whom the fighting men

are - - - - -	2,988,529
---------------	-----------

The fighting men of the other isles	11,471
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The whole fighting men -	3,000,000*
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The

\* A more minute statement of the national force of Great Britain, appears from the general abstract of the subdivision rolls, so far as the same can be at present made up, from the returns transmitted to the secretary of state, in consequence of the General Defence Act, 15th February, 1804. The numbers,

In

The certainty, with which we now know all those satisfactory details adds greatly to the efficient force of the state. During some of our former wars, as we have seen, the pertinacious disputes, with respect to our real population, greatly enfeebled our real powers. The triumphant end, which has been put to all those discussions, by actual enumeration, contributes greatly to our effective force, by the confidence of certainty. It had become a sort of maxim, that, money is the sinews of war. Yet, recent experience seems to demonstrate the fallibility of such sayings, in favour of those, who reasoned in a different manner. “ I agree with Machiavel, says “ the great Lord Bacon, in his *Advancement of Learning*, in condemning the opinion, that moneys “ were the sinews of war; whereas the true sinews “ of war are the sinews of mens arms, that is, a “ valiant, populous, and military nation.”

When

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In the 1st Class, effective,	444,086
2d Class, D <sup>o</sup> -	110,966
3d Class, D <sup>o</sup> -	174,109
4th Class, D <sup>o</sup> -	613,602
The total number effective	1,342,763
Clergy, Licensed Teachers, Me-	
dical Men, and Constables -	24,885
Infirm - - - -	90,938
Voluntary Service - -	406,780
Enrolled in Parishes out of the	
Counties - - - -	2,822
Army, Mariners, Volunteers, Sea	
Fencibles - - - -	139,471
	<hr/>
	549,073

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When the statesmen on the continent saw, during the late war, that our money could not command armies, they supposed, that there was a limit put to our power, whatever our revenues might be. During the present war, the world has seen the nation, as one man, take arms, to defend their liberties, and avenge their wrongs. The statesmen, on the continent, must now behold what Lord Bacon wished to see, the kingdom, enjoying the true finews of war; as *a valiant, populous, and military nation*.

The effective force of the whole was thus stated, in Parliament, on the 9th December, 1803:

Volunteers in Great Britain	- - - -	340,000
in Ireland	- - - -	70,000

The Volunteers of both	-	410,000
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The Officers	- - - -	20,000
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The whole	-	430,000
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The Regular, and Militia Forces,

in Great Britain	- -	130,000
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in Ireland	- - - -	50,000
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The whole, Regulars and Militia	- -	610,000
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The Sea Fencibles	- - - - -	25,000
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The whole Force	- -	635,000
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The Army of Reserve, which had not yet

joined	- - - - -	27,000
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The whole Land Force		662,000
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When

When to those numerous bodies of men are added 120,000 sailors, for navigating our fleets, with a productive revenue, for putting all those in motion, the world, perhaps, never beheld before so great a force.

That the numbers of our people, thus warlike, and enterprising, continually increase, is a fact, which, since the enumeration of 1801, cannot possibly be doubted. This is a circumstance, which adds greatly to the national strength. For, a greater number of people can sustain a greater quantity of debt; a greater number of industrious, knowing, commercial, and money-making people, can with ease pay greater taxes: and hence, it is demonstrable, that the continued increase of the people has the necessary effect of lessening the national burden, and of mitigating the pressures of war.

The late war, which the peace of Amiens brought to an end, was the necessary means, under wise management, of uniting to us, in Ireland, upwards of four millions of fellow subjects. Ireland till now formed, like the revolted colonies, a balance to our power, rather than a support to our strength. United Ireland is of more real worth to Great Britain, than the conquered countries to France. From experience, we know, that our people increase in numbers; from fact, that they increase also in knowledge, in industry, and in wealth; from detail, that they have now more manufactures, shipping, and traffic; from record, that they have improved the surface of their islands, during the late war, beyond all example. Thus, every proof concurs to  
evince,



evinced, that the people were never more prosperous, and that the united nation was never more able to enter into a vigorous war, than in 1803, when the French government made a fresh attack at once upon the liberties of the people, and the independence of the crown.\* If we combine, indeed, the whole foregoing documents together; if we consider the fair inferences deducible from them; if we regard the experience of the past; there is abundant reason to believe, that the united kingdom, if they were less actuated by moderation, might carry on an advantageous war against a restless enemy, for ever. As we commenced hostilities on a larger peace establishment of forces, than this country had ever provided, till a new necessity called for additional securities, amidst a captious peace, with a restless neighbour, we were more prepared, for prompt attack, and successful hostilities, than we had ever been, in the first years of any former war.

We began the war of 1756, with France, when the whole exports of the surplus products of this country, amounted only to £.12,371,916, which were transported in 524,710 tons of shipping; and when the whole custom-house duties, which were paid into the exchequer, amounted merely to £.1,763,314. We commenced the war of 1793,

\* In the year, ended on the 5th of January 1803, the *consolidated fund* yielded £.32,423,605. 9s.; while the whole charge thereon was £.25,667,514. 19s. and hence the surplus appears to have been £.6,756,100. 10s. This alone forms a real demonstration of the opulence, and prosperity of the people.

when the whole cargo of exported commodities were valued at £. 22,585,771, which were transported in 1,493,757 tons of shipping British, and foreign; and when the whole custom-house duties, that were paid into the exchequer, amounted to £. 4,000,000. We began the war of 1803 with France, when the whole value of our surplus products exported was not less, according to the custom-house estimate, than 44,110,897 sterling pounds; which were transported, in 1,926,745 tons of shipping, British, and foreign; and, when the whole custom-house duties, that were paid into the exchequer, amounted to £. 6,087,569, sterling money. We had, in fact, belonging to the British people, in 1792, according to the register, 16,079 ships, which carried 1,540,145 tons, and were navigated by 118,286 mariners. In 1802, we had, according to the same register, 20,568 ships, carrying 2,128,055 tons, which were navigated by 154,530 mariners: and, it thus appears, that we had acquired, during the preceding war, an augmentation of 4,489 vessels, carrying 587,910 tons, which were navigated by 36,244 men. Add to all those ships the Navy of England, consisting of upwards of 1100 vessels of every size; whereof 150 of the line, and 280 frigates; which have broken the fleets of the enemy; which only requires to see the ships of the foe, to destroy them; and which blockade the several fleets of inimical Europe. From those details, then, it is demonstrable, that the United Kingdom was far more powerful, in every thing that constitutes energy and effort, than at the commencement of any former war.

But, to put in motion all those shipping, both of the merchants, and of the King, required a vast sum of money. The ships of the merchants were navigated, by their commercial capital: and the King's ships were fitted, fed, and fought, by the public revenue, to an immense amount. These intimations lead on to a cursory consideration of the public income, and supplies. It is sufficient for our present purpose to state it, as a fact, that during the six years of the present war, ending on the 5th of January 1809, the *public expenditure* of Great Britain, amounted to £.395,945,599; whereof £.166,445,052 arose from the funded, and unfunded debts of the state, and £.229,701,647 from all other public services: of those vast sums, £.224,403,222 were raised by the *ordinary* revenue, and other incidental payments into the exchequer of various kinds; £.92,240,000 were raised by *extraordinary* war taxes; £.81,168,418 were raised by loans, which were added to the funded debts of the state; and £.3,500,000, were advanced by the bank, without any interest, or charge, for so large a sum. But, it ought, at the same time, to be recollected, that a *sinking-fund* of mighty powers then existed in full force, for the redemption of the public debts: On the 1st of February 1803, the sinking-fund of Great Britain amounted to £.5,834,986: On the 1st of February 1810, the same sinking-fund had increased to £.10,509,392.\* Those several sinking

\* For the debt of Ireland, payable in Great Britain, there existed, moreover, on the 1st of February 1803, a sinking-fund of £.258,434: The same sinking-fund had increased before the



sinking-funds gave great facility to finance, and contributed still more to the strength of the state. By such vast statements, the mind is filled, but not overpowered: it perceives how much has been done, by the easiest means.\* It was about the year 1797, that the new, and beneficial system began of imposing aids, contributions, income duties, and convoy duties, which have been denominated *war taxes*. That new system of finance was proposed by Mr. Pitt, was adopted by parliament, and was submitted to by the people: and, it has been already intimated, that the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Commons, and the country, all merit immortal commendation, for approving a measure, which has been the great support of public credit, and of private property. When the present war began, it

1st of February 1810 to £. 743,588: The Emperor's debt, which was guaranteed in Britain, had a sinking-fund annexed to it of £. 47,947, at the first period, and of £. 67,308, at the second.

\* It is a fact that, if the sum, which has thus been raised by the *war taxes*; during the first six years of the present hostilities, had been added to the loan of each year, a further charge would have been incurred of £. 132,969,000 capital stock, and £. 6,755,000 of annual charge, taking the rate, whereat such loans were actually raised, in each year: but, if such, so augmented had been raised, at a rate, as much exceeding their actual rate, as those raised in the three years immediately preceding the imposition of war taxes, during the late war, did during the remainder of the war, an additional charge would have thereby been incurred of £. 40,000,000 capital stock, and £. 1,604,000 annual charge; making in the whole, by such mismanagement, an additional debt of £. 173,000,000 capital stock, with £. 8,360,000, annual charge, which must have been raised, by permanent taxes, on the country.



added a great additional strength to the state, that such a system of finance had been previously adopted, approved, and familiarized to those, who were to be chiefly affected by its operation.\* And this circumstance brought great facility with it, as well as added much to the strength of the state; since every thing new is usually obstructed, and every thing familiar is easily admitted.

Yet, those vast operations, in finance, could not have been performed, and those vast taxes could not have been imposed, but among a prosperous people, whose industry was active, and whose means were progressive. We have seen how much foreign trade Great Britain enjoyed, when the war commenced in 1803, more than this nation enjoyed before, either in war, or peace. So much foreign trade could not have existed, without vast manufactures, at home. And, vigorous manufactures could not have been carried on, if our agriculture had not been in a

\* Of permanent taxes, there were raised, during the present war, before the 5th of January 1809, £. 3,678,723; none being imposed in 1807. Of *war taxes*, there were raised, during the same period, £. 20,133,687, none being imposed, in 1807. In fact, the *permanent* taxes of the year 1808 amounted to £. 32,158,451, of the year 1809 to £. 33,544,349; the *annual* taxes amounted, in 1808, to £. 4,929,790, and in 1809 to £. 4,920,760; the *war taxes*, in 1808 amounted to £. 20,291,797, and in 1809, to £. 20,798,145: and these several amounts, show the abilities of the payers, as well as the vigilance of the management: but the surplus of the *consolidated fund*, amounting, on the 6th of April 1810, to £. 2,233,051. 16. 6, evinces at once the great consumption of the people, and their ability to consume.

healthful

healthful state of annual melioration.\* It is one of our peculiar felicities, that the foe never sets his foot on this enviable island. Every one pursues his avocations, as if hostilities did not exist. Our agriculture, manufactures, and our trade, run on, in their several channels, as if profound peace shed her various blessings on a happy land. And public, as well as private works, which emulate the Roman labours, are carried on with as little interruption, amidst "fierce alarms," as if we enjoyed the profoundest quiet; as if "the European world lay hushed in peace." Proofs of all those intimations, and reasonings, may be found in the subjoined

## TABLE;

\* From the statute book, it appears that, in the 8 years, ending with 1792, when peace existed, there passed, for dividing, inclosing, and draining common, and marsh lands 245 laws: In the 8 years, ending with 1800, there passed for the same salutary ends of agriculture, 589 laws: and, in the 8 years, ending with 1809, during the present war, there passed, with the same wise designs, 757 laws. Can there exist a doubt, then, whether our agriculture was active, during the present war!

TABLE; shewing the number of acts of parliament, which passed in the eight years, ending with 1809, for making, and mending roads, and bridges; for forming canals and harbours; for dividing, inclosing, and draining lands; and for establishing various parochial, and urban improvements, in Great Britain; compared with two previous periods, of eight years each:—

	1802.	1803.	1804.	1805.	1806.	1807.	1808.	1809.	TOTAL.	Total of 8 Years, ending 1800	Total of 8 Years, ending 1792.
Roads and Bridges, -	49	60	49	41	43	54	52	71	419	341	302
Canals, Harbours, &c.	14	16	11	22	19	17	9	19	127	132	64
Dividing, Incloſi and Draining* - }	105	111	57	75	85	98	94	132	757	589	245
Parochial, and Urban Improvements - }	12	17	10	10	33	21	17	21	141	62	139
	180	204	127	148	180	190	172	243	1,444	1,124	750

\* The numerous acts, for dividing, inclosing, and draining, apply only to England and Wales.—In Scotland, such improvements are carried into effect, under an existing law of old authority.

But, of all these pursuits, in peace, or in war, *agriculture* must be allowed to be of the first importance; as all the arts depend on its success for their subsistence. This consideration led to a very full investigation of this interesting subject, some while ago, when years of scarcity, and high prices, had pressed upon the people.† To those ample considerations, I will now beg leave to add some

† See before, p. 311 to 337.

supplementary notices, and a few more *truifms*. The last year of the last century was the epoch of dearth, when the prices of corn rose uncommonly high, and the amount of importations was unexampled.

The first year of the present century continued a period of still higher prices, and perhaps of even greater importation of corn. \* The prices and the importations, both fell very much, in 1802, and in 1803; when they were both, as low, as they can ever be expected, in such a country as this. The prices, and the importations began to rise, a little, in 1804; and both have continued rising, down to the present year. But, all those truths, whether happy, or adverse, will appear most distinctly to the more curious eye, from the following

## TABLE;

\* The greatest nominal price of wheat, which had ever been felt, in this country, was that of 1800, when the average price in England and Wales, of middling wheat, rose to £.5. 13. 4. per statute quarter; and there were imported, in the same year, 2,259,379 quarters. I have said the *greatest nominal price*; as during the dear years, at the end of the preceding century, the real price of corn, was still dearer, and the distress, from want, was much more, taking into the account the higher value of money.



TABLE; shewing the average prices of middling wheat per statute quarter, in England, and Wales, with the *official* values of the importations, and<sup>d</sup> exportations, of all corn, flour, and meal, into and from, Great Britain :\*

The years.	The price of wheat.	Value of imports.	Value of exports.
	s. d.	£.	£.
1801	118 3	3,032,277	69,940
1802	67 5	1,400,901	313,222
1803	56 6	934,567	192,217
1804	60 1	1,201,319	225,683
1805	87 10	1,834,906	180,654
1806	79 —	813,786	101,417
1807	73 3	1,124,300	75,747
1808	79 —	484,040	173,031
1809	95 7	1,473,712	78,301

This *table*, which may be considered, as supplementary to the foregoing, and on the same subject, is interesting, and instructive.† The column of prices undoubtedly represents *the seasons*, which very much regulate the rise, and fall of the rates of buying and selling: We perceive, that the dear years of the last century continued, in 1801: We may see how much the fine seasons of 1802, and 1803, reduced the prices, and the importations, during these years: And, from the year 1803, to the present, the seasons have progressively raised both. The value of *importations* seems to be influenced by the necessities, or the apprehensions of the year: and the value of exportations is moved by the demands, and the supplies of our West Indies, and foreign garrisons. The year 1809 was a season of high price, and large

\* The prices of wheat were settled, by Mr. Catherwood, the Receiver of Corn Returns; the value of imports, and exports, were furnished, by Mr. Irving, the Inspector General.

† See it, before, p. 322.

importation : and, yet the import of wheat was only 54,565 quarters; from Ireland; and 244,454 quarters, from foreign parts; or about  $\frac{1}{34}$  part of the bread corn, which is annually consumed: And, the great import of grain, consists of oats, which amounted, in 1809, from Ireland, to 782,039, and from foreign countries 296,911 quarters, making in all 1,078,950 quarters. There were imported into London, during 1809, of wheat 293,310 quarters, whereof there were, from Ireland, 765 quarters, and from foreign parts, 163,422 quarters: of oats, there were brought into London, during the same year, 986,559; whereof, from Ireland, only 78,570 quarters, and from foreign parts, 278,860 quarters. We may thus perceive, then, that though London be the *great market*, Ireland supplies it with little, and foreign countries not with a great deal. But, we are not to suppose, that the whole of those importations of grain is consumed in London: No; much is sent, during dear years into the interior country, by the Thames, and the Paddington Canal; and much is sent to Kent, and Essex, which are two corn counties. This last circumstance opens to view a policy, which probably prevails, throughout the whole nation: Those counties send their wheat to London, and carry back oats to the country, in return: We may thus see, that the growers of corn may be entirely trusted with their own interests: They raise such beasts, as are most beneficial; and they cultivate, in their rotation of crops, such corn, as they judge to be most profitable to them: Thus, from this freedom of choice, we may infer, that every thing is raised,

raised, and grown, which is most advantageous to themselves, and the state, amidst the changes of the world.

In considering, heretofore\*, this interesting subject, it was intimated, that an established system of corn laws is beyond the power of human wisdom: The seasons cannot be regulated, by statute; nor can the depreciation of the pound sterling, or money of account be prevented by law: Now; if the seasons govern the domestic supply; and a corn law can only be made to operate, according to a given table of prices, stated in the money of account, the pound sterling, with its aliquot parts, can be neither a *measure*, nor a *medium*, if so to speak for the purpose of argument, it have no *stability*; since all measures, and all mediums, must mean something of fixedness, or they mean nothing. The corn act of 1791†, which had been formed under the experienced eye of the late Lord Liverpool, appeared, by a dozen years experience, to have completely failed, as a *corn system*; owing to the two overpowering causes, which have just been mentioned, the unfavourable seasons, and the unfixedness of the standard of prices.‡ At length came a better season, in 1802, and a still more favourable year, in 1803: and, the growers of corn began to grudge the solace of the

† See before, 329—31.

\* 31 Geo. 3. ch. 30.

‡ See the table of prices, and the value of importations, which have just been stated. Malting, and distillery, were prohibited till the 25th of March 1802, by 41 G. 3. ch. 16. Ireland was equally distressed, by the scarcity of bad seasons, and was, in the same manner, relieved, by temporary statutes, 41 G. 3. ch. 34,—36,—91.

consumers. This uncharitableness produced a new statute to regulate the import, and export of corn: This regulation consisted in raising the prices, at which the importation of grain should be allowed, and lowering the prices, at which exportation should take place.\* While this act was in its course it was not perceived, that the favourable season, and low prices, of 1803, had obstructed importation to a great amount: Neither was it foreseen, that the two subsequent years, as they were more unfavourable, in their supplies, and prices, would promote the importation of corn, notwithstanding the recent regulations of an interested act. Such considerations did not prevent a new statute, to amend the former.† The seasons laughed at the folly of interestedness, in its continued endeavours, to perform impossibilities.

At length, liberality interposed, to make a corn act, with some sense for its principle, and some utility for its effects: and, there was passed, on the 16th of July 1806, the statute for permitting *the free intercourse of corn*, with *Ireland*.‡ As Ireland had been now consolidated into one kingdom with England and Scotland; as the law of the land allowed the free communication, and transport of corn, throughout the whole extent of Great Britain; it followed, as a consequence of the Union, that the same principle, and practice, should be extended to

\* 44 G. 3. 109.

† 45 G. 3. ch. 86.

‡ 46 G. 3. 97.



the united whole of the consolidated kingdom. But interest is an obstinate passion: and, the growers of corn came forward, in the subsequent year, when the prices had somewhat fallen, in the home market, to declare, that they did not mean to include *foreign grain* in the free intercourse of corn, with Ireland\*. But, if the wisdom of the wise had enacted, that the free intercourse of corn, through any part of the united kingdom, was sound policy, as well as real justice; if national beneficence had determined, that it were fit, and just, during the greatest scarcity, to part our loaf, with our colonies, our fisheries, our garrisons, in distant parts; the same beneficence must equally decide, that the same fitness, and justice extend to Ireland; and that the statute, which limits this justice, and that fitness, to any part of the united kingdom, as well as the dominions to the same belonging, is unsalutary, and sordid.

Whatever sordid men may do, or think, it has become quite apparent, that the consumption of Great Britain is greater, than her own supply. And to answer the deficiency, when the price of wheat, in England and Wales, had risen, in 1809, to £. 4. 15s. 7d. per quarter, there was imported a one-and-twentieth part of the whole consumption. The whole importation of every sort of Grain into Great Britain, according to a three years average, ending with 1809, amounted to 1,194,362 quarters; whereof there were supplied, by Ireland, 614,240  $\frac{1}{2}$  quarters; and,

\* 47 G. 3. ch. 7.

by other countries, under the existing circumstances, 580,121  $\frac{1}{2}$  quarters\*. From the detail below, it clearly appears that, of the whole supply of Great Britain, by importation, in those years, Ireland furnished of wheat a little more than one seventh part; of barley nearly three fourths; of oats much more than two third parts; of rye about one thirty-fifth part; of beans somewhat less than one sixth part; of pease more than one thirty-fifth part; and of the whole supply more than one half; owing to the great proportion of oats: of all which, however, little comes into the great market of London, and Westminster. Since such a supply, then, is necessary, when the seasons are, in the least, adverse, and the prices rise, according to the produce of the season†, it follows, as certain consequences of true policy,

\* The detailed state of that supply, according to the three years average, ended with 1809, was as under :—

The kinds of Corn.	From Ireland.	From other Countries.	The Total of both.
	Qrs.	Qrs.	Qrs.
Wheat, and wheat flour	46,598	277,931	324,529
Barley, barley meal, malt	20,338 $\frac{1}{2}$	7,611 $\frac{1}{2}$	27,950
Oats, and oatmeal - -	543,774	252,573	796,347
Rye, and rye meal - -	245	8,403	8,648
Beans - - - - -	2,790	14,661	17,451
Pease - - - - -	495	16,730	17,225
Indian corn, and meal	— —	2,212	2,212
The Total - - -	614,240 $\frac{1}{2}$	580,121 $\frac{1}{2}$	1,194,362

† The average prices of middling wheat, in England and Wales, were, in 1807, 73s. 3d.; in 1808, 79s.; and in 1809, 95s. 7d. as computed by Mr. Catherwood.

that

that the cheaper the supply so much the better, that the cheapness will result much, from the certainty, and that the certainty of the supply will much depend on the legal permission to import, and on the freedom of transmissiion, from one country to another, and from one district to another, without obstruction of any kind : If the wisest men have advised, that during every season, and at all times, corn may, and shall be sent, throughout the whole nation, without hindrance; in order that, the whole people should be supplied, at the cheapest rate, is it not equally wise, to allow the necessary supply to be imported, from every country, without any obstruction.

But, it is in vain to speak of the *necessary supply*, without we know the *usual consumption*, from some rational estimate : The very well informed author of *The Corn Tracts*, after all his correspondence, and elaboration, failed in producing a satisfactory estimate of the common consumption, as he knew not the numbers of consumers, after all his research, and diligence. Other persons of less knowledge, and perseverance, have failed, as might be expected, still more egregiously. The enumeration of the people, in 1801, has supplied what was so much wanted, by the political economists, not only the numbers of people, but their classes : and, other circumstances, and facts, which illustrate the obscure subject of the consumption of classes, and individuals, have been collected, and ascertained, with more success, though not with greater diligence, and attention, than former writers, on this interesting subject. By the enumeration of 1801, the people of England, and of Wales  
appeared

appeared to amount to 9,343,578 : and, it has now been ascertained, that they consume, according to the various proportions of persons living in the country, and towns, every year, of wheat 7,716,065 quarters\*. The whole consumption, of every class, subsisting on

\* Of the whole people, there lived, in towns, having more inhabitants than 1500, 2,356,773 souls, who consumed, yearly, at  $7\frac{1}{2}$  bushels each - - - - - 2,209,475 qrs.

The army of 198,351 consume, at 9 bushels, by each person - - - - - 223,145

The navy of 126,279, at 9 bushels to each seaman - - - - - 142,064

The seamen, in the merchants service, 144,588, registered at 9 bushels each sailor - 162,662

The convicts, amounting to 1410, at 9 bushels each person - - - - - 1,585

Of the people, 6,576,117, living in the villages, and country, whereof two-thirds, or 4,344,118, eat wheat bread; and consume 9 bushels each - - - - - 4,887,133

There are consumed, in making starch, paste, and other purposes - - - - - 90,000

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The whole consumption of those various persons and causes - - - - - 7,716,065

The remaining third of the people, or 2,172,059, who live in the country, and villages, eat barley, oats, and rye.

About 900,000 people, who eat barley, consume, at one quarter and three bushels each, every year - - - - - 1,237,500

About 600,000 persons, who eat rye, consume each one quarter and two bushels - 750,000

About 672,059 persons, who eat oats, consume about two quarters each - - - - - 1,344,118



the different kinds of grain, may be recapitulated, as follows; allowing to each person, two quarters, one bushel, and one peck:—

	In 1801.	In 1809.
	Qrs.	Qrs.
Of wheat, there were } consumed - - - }	7,716, 100	7,895,800
Of barley - - - - -	5,322,500	5,430,000
Of oats - - - - -	5,960,000	6,090,000
Of rye - - - - -	785,000	785,000
Of pease - - - - -	205 000	210,000
Of beans - - - - -	180,000	190, 000
The totals - - - -	20,168,600	20,600,800
To the above must be added the } consumption of Scotland - }		3,988,400
The total consumption of Great } Britain, in 1809 - - - }		24,589,200

The first column above, as it contains the estimate, on the numbers of people, in 1801, must necessarily fall short of the consumption of the year 1809: Supposing the people to increase, at present, at the rate of somewhat more than 25,000 a year, about 200,000 must be added, for the probable increase between the years 1801, and 1809; so as to raise the whole amount of consumers, at present, to 9,544,000. In those estimates, there was no allowance made, for the consumption, by distillery. The annual  
average

average of the imports of grain, in the three years, ending with 1809, amounts to somewhat more than  $\frac{1}{21}$  part of the whole consumption of Great Britain, in 1809. The annual average of the import from Ireland was, in those three years, nearly  $\frac{1}{40}$  of that consumption. The annual average of the whole imports from foreign countries, in those three years, is less than  $\frac{1}{42}$  part, and more than  $\frac{1}{43}$  part of that consumption, within Great Britain.

Yet, all those various estimates of the annual consumption of Great-Britain would be incomplete, without a similar view of the vast consumption of the mighty metropolis of the British empire, which is more than  $\frac{1}{12}$  part of the whole consumption of England and Wales. By an estimate, which has been made, from a variety of statements, of the usual consumption of various families, different individuals, and of public establishments, and from the sentiments of intelligent bakers, it appears, that the average consumption of each person, in the metropolis, in bread, pastry, and puddings, is somewhat under  $7\frac{1}{2}$  bushels of wheat, in every year. By thus taking the average consumption, at  $7\frac{1}{2}$  bushels for each person, on the population of the metropolis, in 1801, of 864,845 individuals, the whole necessary consumption must then have been 810,793 quarters of wheat, every year. If to this quantity be added what is yearly used, for starch, paste, and other purposes, amounting to 9,207 quarters; then, will the whole consumption of *wheat*, in the metropolis be 820,000 quarters, in 1801. By taking proper mediums, by adverting to various facts, and attending to different circumstances,

in respect to the annual consumption of barley, oats, beans, pease, and rye, the quantities of each yearly consumed have been ascertained, with sufficient precision to answer the present estimate: and, the necessary result, from all those details is, that there was consumed, in London, Westminster, and their suburbs, of every sort of corn, including the flour, and meal, during the year 1801, the quantity of 1,722,800 quarters: but, as there was an increase of consumers, in those districts, during the eight years, immediately following 1801, it became necessary to make the same estimate upon a greater number of persons: whence, we have another result, which shows the whole consumption of the year 1809 to have been 1,762,100 quarters of every sort of corn\*: thus forming, as hath been intimated, rather more than  $\frac{1}{12}$  of the consumption of England and Wales.

It is sufficiently known to all intelligent men, that both the consumption, and the supply of corn, have undergone a great change, during the last sixty years. In the preceding period, the consumption was but little, when compared with the export, while there was no importation†. In those days, scarcity came but

\* The whole Consumption of the Metropolis may be detailed, as under:

Years.	Wheat.	Barley.	Oats.	Beans.	Pease.	Rye.	The totals.
	QRS.	QRS.	QRS.	QRS.	QRS.	QRS.	QRS.
In 1801	820,000	413,000	461,520	12,000	11,000	5,280	1,722,800
In 1809	838,500	422,500	472,300	12,300	11,200	5,300	1,762,100

† Sir James Stuart, in speaking on this subject, with a reference to the dear year, 1757, when the quantity imported

was

but seldom ; and much bullion was brought into this productive country, in payment for its corn sent out, under a bounty, which encouraged the export of it. Such was what is considered by some, as the happiest of all conditions, when corn is cheap, and money is plenty. Yet, this state of things, whether fortunate, or unhappy, soon after changed to a greater consumption, than the country could supply\*. This change took place, while the nation was the most prosperous. Owing to this course of prosperity, we have more people, a people, more industrious, and a people, more opulent. During that prosperity, the domestic improvements of our island were carried forward to an unexampled extent ; and great quantities of land were thereby brought into tilth, which before lay common, or waste. Our agriculture was carried on with more skill, and capital, and success, than it ever had been, when the

was merely 151,743 quarters of all sorts of grain, which did not amount to  $\frac{1}{89}$  of the ordinary consumption of the people of England, and of Wales ; [being then 13,555,850 quarters, according to the author of the Corn Tracts ;] and is equivalent to their subsistence, for 4 days, 2 hours, and 24 minutes. Political Economy, 8<sup>o</sup> Ed. Vol. 1. p. 147. In 1809, the necessary supply from abroad, amounted to the  $\frac{1}{21}$  part of the whole consumption of the same year : So great had been the change, in the consumption, and supply, from abroad, since 1757.

\* When this change took place, so as to be observed, the whole export of England may be taken, at £.15,000,000 sterling a year ; and the exports of the year 1809 may be taken at £.46,000,000 sterling : so great a difference had meantime occurred in our trade, and in our opulence, during the intermediate period.



export of corn was the greatest\*; and this capital, and that skill, and melioration, produced a greater quantity of *the fruits of the earth*, even in a bad season, than were formerly raised, in a good season†. It is not, then, that less is produced, than formerly; but that more is consumed: and this state of things was gradually introduced, by the augmentation of the numbers of the people, by their change of position, from the country to the towns, and by the increase of their consumption of wheat, rather than rye, owing to their greater enterprize, and wealth. Such are the *truisms*, which result from the foregoing facts.

We must not complain of the comforts of a free people, who are a free spending people. We cannot limit their consumption of victuals, whatever we may virtually do of their drink, by means of *the excises*, which produce abundantly. The question, then, arising from this accurate view of our domestic affairs, is how to supply the wants of the people, who do not cease to consume freely amidst scarcity, and dearneſs. This is a very difficult question, between the growers of corn, and the consumers; owing to the pertinacity of the one class, and the impatience of the other. The pretensions of the first are much worse founded, than the claims of the second. The skopkeeper, who may live the next door to me, has no right to claim my custom, at any rate; any more than the baker, who lives two doors further, has any pretension to my consumption, while another baker,

\* See before p. 312—32.

† *Ib.* 315.

in the next street, sells better bread, on cheaper terms. If these reasonings be just, the growers of corn have no very valid right, to claim the exclusive supply of the domestic market, which they are unable to fill with sufficient quantities; and are unwilling to sell, at adequate prices: and, we are thus led to concur with the just deduction of doctor A. Smith, when he says “the unrestrained freedom of the corn trade, as it is the only effective preventive of the miseries of famine; so is it the best palliative of the inconveniences of dearth\*.”

We are thus led forward to take a slight view of the commercial affairs of Scotland, which, in every age, has partaken of the prosperity, or decline of England. Scotland, as we have seen, did not feel the benefits of *the Union*, for upwards of forty years. The recent prosperity of Scotland began much about the time, with the prosperity of England. The agriculture of Scotland, at least in the southern shires, has been carried up, by skill, and diligence, to a high state of perfection: and the rentals of the landlords, and the comforts of the farmers, have kept an analogous pace, with the progress of her husbandry. The manufactures of Scotland have run an equal race of prosperity. And, her trade, domestic, and foreign, has continued an onward course, whatever obstructions time, and chance, have opposed to her progress. Scotland did not feel much the bankruptcies of 1793; and she still less felt the alarm of the invasion, in 1797, or the consequent distress of

\* Wealth of Nations ii, 297.

the commercial world\*. There was, however, a flatness in the amount of the export trade, in that alarming year, from which a spirited people, and enterprising traders, soon recovered. During the three prosperous years, which preceded the war of 1793, the whole exports of Scotland were valued at £. 3,762,823. After the chances, and changes of that war, Scotland, by effort, and perseverance, more than doubled her exports, at the return of peace; as we may perceive, from the estimate of their value of her exports, in the three years of languishing hostilities, and captious peace, ended with 1802; amounting to £. 7,793,425. A new war began, in 1803, which had, for its odious ends, on the side of the foe, the sacrifice of industry to warfare, and the destruction of trade, at the frantic call of infuriate enmity: yet, industry, with the ploughshare in one hand, and the sword, in the other, was not to be alarmed. And the whole circle of commerce moved, in Scotland, throughout this war against traffic, as if it had been conducted by the friendly hand of peace. And what prescience foresaw became the result, in fact: in the three years of warfare, ending with 1809, Scotland exported to the enlarged amount of £. 9,936,280; so that

\* See the evidence given by Mr. H. Thornton, before the Secret Committee of the House of Commons, Report, 143. He said, that the paper circulation of Scotland was computed to be from £. 1,200,000 to £. 1,500,000; and the quantities of guineas were supposed to be about 50,000: and seven-eighths of the bank notes were supposed to be twenty, and twenty-one shilling notes. The difficulties of that period appear to have little distressed Scotland, owing to real stability, and prudent management.

here is a surplus of £. 2,142,855 sterling value, more than the same country enjoyed, during the three captious years, ending with 1802\*. But, had Scotland as many ships, after seven years of war, as she possessed, before this course of hostilities began? Yes: Scotland enjoyed 2,349 ships, carrying 183,935 tons, in 1802; and 2,534 ships, bearing 206,075 tons, in 1809, according to the register. Such being the fair result of all those details, it is impossible for any one to say, that Scotland has not prospered, during the war, which prognostication foretold would involve her in ruin.

We may moreover infer, from those details, that Scotland had more people than ever, more busy people, who enjoyed more capital, and exerted more enterprize: and, by those means, they grew rich, while they paid their usual taxes of peace, and the uncommon taxes of war. From all those intimations, we may perceive, that while such a people pursue their accustomed industry, and engage, with usual enterprize, in the adventures of traffic, they may defy the enmity of the foreign dominator, who threatens, with frantic tone, the positive ruin of such a people! That a considerable change has, meantime, taken place in the old habits

\* Such, certainly, was the result of the general export trade of Scotland, during the present war! But, she also enjoyed more of foreign trade, during this war, than she possessed before hostilities began: the whole value of foreign goods exported from Scotland, in the two years of peace, 1801, and 1802, amounted only to £. 992,980: but, in the two years of war, 1808, and 1809, Scotland exported, of foreign goods the increased amount of £. 1,325,248: Such, then, was the fact!



of the Scottish people, cannot be denied. Many a man now consumes wheat, who eat none before; and many a woman wears shoes now, who wore none before. These happy changes arose gradually, from their becoming more industrious, and more opulent; and of course more able to follow their propensities, without the restraint of former penury, or the vassalage arising from the will of a master. In Scotland, the use of wheat has increased, and is every day greatly increasing: the use of oats, for bread, is decreasing; but the consumption of oats, by horses, is greatly increasing: the use of barley, for bread, is diminishing; but, the use of barley for beer, whiskey, and other purposes of brewing, and distilling, is greatly increasing: both the cultivation, and the use of rye, are decreasing: the use of pease, in bread, is decreasing; but, the appropriation of pease to the feeding of hogs, and other objects of consumption, is increasing: the application of beans to the feeding of horses, and of hogs is increasing. All these alterations, in the modes of management, have arisen, by degrees, in proportion, as the people became much more easy, in their circumstances.

In forming an estimate of the yearly consumption of the Scottish people, we must recollect that, in the last fifty years, all orders of persons have left the country, and live in towns, where they subsist more from the country than upon it. Scotland was found, by the enumeration of 1801, to contain 1,618,300 people. By comparing the population of 1791, with the numbers, in 1801, there appears an increase of 103,304 persons, or 10,330 a year: and, at this rate,

rate, it must have acquired 82,640, in the effluxion of eight years, from 1801 to 1809: so as to have carried up the whole consumers of Scotland to 1,701,000. And, allowing 2 quarters, 2 bushels, and 3 pecks, or  $1\frac{3}{4}$  pounds to each person, the whole consumption of the people, in 1801, must have been, exclusive of the legal distillery, 3,799,130 quarters: and according to the same allowances, and reservation, the whole consumption of 1809 must have been 3,988,400 quarters\*. Such, then, was the consumption of the people of Scotland, at successive periods, who consumed, according to their change of habits, and their melioration of circumstances, from greater industry, and more wealth.

\* The general totals of Consumption above, may be cast into detail, as under:

There were eat, in the yrs 1801 1809	Wheat. Qrs.	Barley. Qrs.	Oats. Qrs.	Beans Qrs.	Pease. Qrs.	Rye. Qrs.	The totals. Qrs.
	323,000	1,079,400	2,107,550	25,000	176,900	87,280	3,799 130
	345,000	1,133,370	2,213,000	26,330	185,700	85,000	3,988,400

Of, wheat, there were consumed, in 1801, for bread, patty, and puddings, 316,650 quarters; and for starch, paste, and other purposes 6,350: Of the above population,  $\frac{5}{6}$ ths consume oats, barley, rye, and pease, at the rate of 9 bushels of oats, 3 bushels of barley,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  bushel of rye, and 1 bushel of pease, each person. Of oats, there are also consumed by horses, poultry, and by other animals, 590 quarters. Of barley, in addition to the people, as above, in beer, and smuggled whiskey, 500,000 quarters; by hogs, fowls, and other animals, 3,600 quarters, and for pot barley, 70,000 quarters. Of rye, in addition to what was consumed by the people, there were eat by hogs, poultry, and others, 3,000 quarters. In addition, to what was consumed, of pease for bread, there were consumed in soup, pudding, and by hogs, 8,327. And of beans, there were eat, by horses, hogs, and other animals, 25,000 quarters. It was deemed necessary to submit these specifications, after ascertaining many facts, and weighing many circumstances.

After

After this full discussion, with regard to the people of England, and of Scotland, it may gratify a reasonable curiosity, to inquire a little, how it has fared with the people of Ireland, at various periods of their successive fortunes. I have, however, no purpose to emulate Sir John Davies, in discovering “The true causes why Ireland was never brought under obedience to the Crown of England till the reign of King James:” neither am I ambitious, to philosophize with Petty; nor design I to essay the improvement of Ireland with Dobbs: I will not be so fashionable, as to delude, under the common pretence of instructing the good people of Great Britain: and, as much has been written of late, with various value, for their intelligence, or deception, I will only hazard a few intimations; with regard to the domestic economy of Ireland, from early times to the present\*. When King William landed, in Ireland, he said, unsheathing his sword, “This is a country worth fighting for;” But, as the present object is legislation, rather than warfare, it may be added, that Ireland is an island, well worthy of national care.

\* I do not understand the meaning of those pamphleteers, who profess to convey instruction, yet write whole chapters concerning English, and Irish statutes, which have been long since repealed. For very different information, the parliament pays yearly £. 1,780, for the extraordinary trouble of making out the public accounts. I presume to think that money well expended; as the information is of great value, and the more so, as it is without a gloss. For such information too much cannot be given; but, for the other sort of information, deceptive as it is, too little cannot be given.

The

The first, who treated of "*Ireland's Natural History*," being a true description of its situation, greatness, shape, and nature; with its promontories, harbours, roads, and bays," was Gerard Boate, Doctor of Physick, to the State, in Ireland, whose curious work was published, in 1652. Then came Sir William Petty, with his treatise, on the *Cælum*, and *Solum* of Ireland; shewing the salubrity of the one, and the fruitfulness of the other; and, there are more recent writers, who retail the speculations of Boate, and of Petty, in more delusive forms; "to infuse bad influence into the unwary breast." Actuated by this principle, these retailers of old fashioned goods forget to tell their customers, how many stormy seasons the late Murdoch Mackenzie was employed, by the English Admiralty, to make a *maritime survey of Ireland*; and to give *nautical descriptions, and directions*\*. All these helps to the navigators of Ireland are now pushed aside, by delusory notices of a very different sort, that there are no hidden rocks on the Irish coasts. Whatever there may be in this, there is a moral truth, which ought never to be forgotten, *ports* will not make *trade*; but *trade* will make *ports*.

The *greatness*, and *shape* of Ireland did not escape those vastly intelligent men, Boate, and Petty. Arthur Dobbs, who in sense, and candour, is the next *political anatomist* to Boate, and Petty, computed the area of Ireland to contain of *plantation acres*

\* Mackenzie's *Maritime Survey* was published, at London, 1776.



11,042,642. Doctor Beaufort, by more minute investigations, has carried up the *eleven millions* of Dobbs to *twelve millions*, *Iryh* measure, which is equal to 19,436,000 acres *English* measure\*. By comparing the *maritime outline* of Mackenzie, with the Engineer's Survey of Ireland, it will, at length, be found, that its superficies extends to 33,631 square miles, or 21,523,840 statute acres, which exhibit Ireland, in a larger point of view, than former surveyors supposed, and stated. But, what does it avail, that Ireland is thus enlarged, and the *cælum*, and *solum*, are excellent; since, in the language of Shaképeare,

“ ——— Nought's had; all's spent;

“ Where our desire is got, *without content*.”

If the climate of Ireland had spared Doctor Boate, he would have added two more books; the one, of all kinds of plants; and “the other, of all sorts of living creatures;” and to have added a fourth book, “concerning the *natives* of Ireland,

\* Memoir of the Map of Ireland. Sir W. Petty, who surveyed Ireland, says, “The whole territory of Ireland consists of twelve millions acres, English measure, of arable, meadow, and good pasture land; with about two millions rocky, boggy, and scrubby pasture, commonly, but falsely, called *unprofitable*. The rest being absolute bogs, lochs, rocks, sands, strands, rivers, and highways. Of all which lands, the yearly rent (the quit rent, and tithe excepted) was supposed to be £.900,000; and worth to a purchaser, £.9,000,000 sterling.” All this was said, about the year 1672, by the best informed man of that age, perhaps of any age.

“ and

“ and their old fashions, laws, and customs, as like-  
 “ wife, the great pains taken by the English, ever  
 “ since the Conquest, for to civilize them, and to  
 “ improve the country.” Much is the death of  
 Boate to be lamented; as he had great capabilities,  
 for such inquiries\*. Sir William Petty well sup-  
 plied the failure of Doctor Boate. In his *Political*  
*Anatomy*, 1672, he stated the number of people in  
 Ireland, as about 1,100,000, viz. 300,000 English,  
 Welsh, and Scottish protestants; and 800,000 papists:  
 The said 1,100,000 lived in about 200,000 houses;  
 whereof there were about 16,000 houses, which  
 have more than one chimney; about 24,000 that  
 have but one chimney; and all the other houses,  
 being 160,000, are wretched cabins, without chim-  
 ney, window, or door shut, and worse than those of  
 the savage Americans, and wholly unfit for the  
 making merchantable butter, cheese, or the manu-  
 factures of woollen, linen, or leather. Thus far the  
 intelligent Petty. Next came *Colonel* Laurence,  
 who wrote on the domestic economy of Ireland,  
 during the same age: and, he complained, that it  
 was impossible to get the inhabitants of those  
*wretched cabins*, to work. In the subsequent period,  
 appeared, in the scene, at Dublin, Arthur Dobbs,  
 who, though he had not the original genius of Petty,  
 was one of the best informed men, in Ireland: and,  
 he complained, that there were 34,425 strolling

\* Gerard Boate, M.D. died at Dublin, on the 19th of  
 January 1649-50.—Preface to Ireland's Natural History.

beggars,

beggars, in that kingdom\*. He explained this striking instance of mendicity, by remarking, that great numbers of the *native Irish*, in the mountainous parts of the kingdom, that have houses, and small farms, by which they might very well maintain themselves; but, when they have sown their corn, planted their potatoes, cut their turf, and hired their cows, or sent them to the mountains, did then shut up their doors, and go a-begging, during the whole summer, till the harvest†. This exhibits a singular state of society; which, as it no longer exists, evinces some progress of improvement.

The vastly well informed Petty gives another view of the people of Ireland. The Irish papists, says he, besides Sunday, and the 29 holydays, appointed by law, do, one place with another, observe about 24 days more, in the year, in which they do no corporal labour; so as they have but 266 working days: whereas the protestants, not strictly observing all the legal holydays, by a total forbearing of labour, have in effect 300 working days, in the year, that is 34

\* He published his *Essay on the Trade, and Improvement of Ireland*, at Dublin, in 1729: He was a member of the Irish parliament; and had examined with care the custom-house ledgers, and the public accounts. He died the King's Governor of North Carolina.

† His *Essay* 47. He says the facts are undeniable; as they had been confessed by some of those, who had been caught; and, he adds, that, by those means, and thieving, they picked up enough to pay their rent; and by the help of their cattle, corn, and potatoes, lived idle the whole winter.

days

days more than the papists. On this head, Dobbs confirms, in the subsequent age, the representations of Petty, in prior times: he says, that he had observed in a popish almanack, that the popish holy-days were at least 49 more than the law allowed; considering also that the common Irish papists keep St. Patrick's day, his wife's, and his wife's mother's, with many others equally ridiculous: these days are generally spent in debauchery, and rioting, by those who ought to labour\*. We may thus perceive, from the intelligent-representations of Petty, and Dobbs, that a protestant is a better working animal, than a papist: and it thus equally appears, that in points of policy, the hardest worker is entitled to the preference. Another moral view may be taken of the Irish people; as they consist of descendants from *the Celts*, or from *the Goths*; the first, even now, being actuated by habits, much more than the last, which indispose them to fishery, to navigation, to shipping, and to industry: and in this view of the subject, the descendants of the Goths, as they are the most industrious, and enterprizing, are entitled to preference, when the balance of policy hangs in doubtful scales. These distinctions, have, through many ages, had greater influence on the domestic economy of Ireland, than those, who have only taken superficial views of the country, and people, have imagined. Why is it, that there is so little *fishing* along the shores of Ireland, and the western coasts of Scotland, after so

\* Essay 96—7.



many laws have been passed, and so much money bestowed, for promoting it? The answer must be, because the great body of the people of both had, from their propensities, an aversion from sea affairs. This also is the cause, that Ireland, and the western coasts of Scotland, have so few shipping: and the parliament, like discreet parents, persevered in laudable endeavours, to change the wayward habits of such a people for better practices, though without all the good effects, that might have been expected, from such wise policy: It was, therefore, unphilosophical, in such a statesman as Sir William Temple, to tell us, that Ireland is better situated, than Britain, for traffic, and fishery. Any boy can carry a horse to a pond; but a man cannot make him drink. It is not the advantages of the country, from nature, that is the point of inquiry; but, the several natures of the people, which dispose, or indispose them, for the labours of industry, and the enterprizes of trade.

Ireland, during the long period of her fortunes, and misfortunes, has been inhabited by people of various principles, and of dissimilar numerosity; as we may indeed learn from the intelligent pages of Petty. During the disputes about the populousness of England, it was the passion, as we have seen, to diminish the numbers of the people. At present, it is the practice of those Irish writers, who are ambitious of instructing the *dullards* of Britain, to enlarge the numbers of the Irish people; to exaggerate the numbers of the papists, and to diminish the numerosity of the protestants; as if such representations

representations did not disclose the true cause, why the Irish people enjoy so few of the many good things, which result from well directed industry. The people of Ireland have been lately estimated, by various writers, with various views, to be 4,000,000; to be 5,000,000; to be 6,000,000: If there be, in Ireland, 700,000 houses, with  $5\frac{1}{2}$  persons in each; then, must there be 4,200,000; if six dwell in every house, then must there be 4,900,000; and if there be 10, in every house; then must there be 7,000,000 of people, in Ireland. Who sees not, that such exaggerations can only be corrected, by enumeration. Meantime, we hear no more of the many persons, who lived formerly in the wretched cabins, which had neither hearths, windows, nor doors\*. They may pay now the *hearth money tax*, who never paid before; and may live, by labour, who formerly existed, by beggary. But, we are still informed, from the hearth-money record, that there are more than 3,000,000 of people, who live in houses, having *one hearth*. It would be of great importance to know, who, and what they are, who live in such houses; in order to judge of their efficiency, by their residence. In the meantime, it may gratify a reasonable curiosity, to ascertain the size of the chief towns of Ireland, which are the principal seats of its commerce. In this country, in which large collections of people did not anywhere exist, during ancient times, there are only

\* Yes; there are still returned upwards of 438,271 *paupers*, in Ireland.

four, which contain more than 40,000 souls\*. The other towns are of a lower order; having much fewer people, with a smaller number of shipping. It is, perhaps, the principal infelicity of Ireland, which is undoubtedly a populous country, that the several classes are not properly assorted, of rich, and poor, middling, and many†. The detail below would be regarded, in any other country, than Ireland, as representing an unnatural state of society; though in the returns of Dublin, we may perceive a pretty just gradation of ranks.

Ireland had been inhabited, a thousand years, by a Celtic people, when they were invaded, by

\* Dublin contained 182,000, who possessed 212 ships, carrying 14,167 tons.

Cork contained 73,000, who had 75 ships, carrying 4,493 tons.

Limerick had 45,000, who had 45 ships, carrying 2,420 tons.

Waterford had 43,000, who had 23 ships, carrying 2,250 tons.

† From the following Return to the House of Commons, in 1792, we may see the several classes represented, with sufficient accuracy, for the present purpose. There were returned houses of *one* hearth - - - 483,990  
 There were houses of *two* hearths - - - 31,433  
 There were house of *three* hearths - - - 9,466  
 There were houses of *four* hearths - - - 6,401  
 There were houses of *five* hearths - - - 4,355  
 There were houses of *six* hearths - - - 4,235  
 There were houses of *seven* hearths - - - 3,498  
 There were houses of *eight* hearths - - - 2,867  
 There were houses of *nine* hearths - - - 1,738  
 There were houses of *ten* hearths - - - 1,263

the Gothic Eastmen. From the settlement of the Eastmen, in their harbours, we might infer, that the ancient Irish were a divided people, and little addicted to naval affairs, if their annals did not evince those unhappy peculiarities of their original habits, which still continue to operate. They submitted to Henry II. without much struggle\*. When Henry departed, in 1173, he left behind him three distinct races of men: the old Irish; the Eastmen; and the Norman English: and those several lineages were left under an unhappy system: during four centuries and a quarter, the sword was seldom sheathed: renewed warfare, or perpetual anarchy, domineered by turns, in a wretched land, till the accession of James I. introduced the rule of law, and the energies of colonization.

It is curious to remark, that the first detail, which we have of the commercial matters of Ireland, is a poetical piece, entitled “The Policie of keeping the Sea†.” The ingenious author speaks, like some

\* There is, at this day, saith Sir William Petty, no monument, or real argument, that, when the Irish were first invaded, they had any *stone housing* at all, any money, any foreign trade, any learning, but the legend of saints, nor any manufacture, nor the least use of navigation, or the art military.

*Political Anatomy.*

† See that very interesting document of the year 1437, in Hackluyt's Voyages, edit. 1598, vol. 1, p. 187. In chapter 9th the Rhymer treats of “The Commodities of Ireland, and keeping thereof:”

“To keep Ireland, that it be not lost,

“For, it is a *boterasse*, and a poft.”



writers of recent times, of the natural qualities of Ireland; of her havens, and bays, sure, wide, and deep; of its fertility; of things that therein do grow, of mines of silver and *gold*,

“For of silver and gold, there is the oore

“Among the wilde Irish, though they be poore.”

The commodities, and *chaffare* of Ireland, he said, and sung, consisted of hides, skins, Irish wool, *linen clothe*, and other things of great worth, and value; we may perceive, however, that her *merchandize* then consisted, chiefly of the rude produce of a fruitful soil, and of the *herthes hides*, and other matters of *venerie*. Yet, this ancient commercial writer says nothing of the *balance of trade*, on which some theorists continue to doat, with fond affection.

As Ireland possesses the power of resuscitation, in a high degree, she prospered greatly, during the forty years, which succeeded the complete suppression of Tyrone's rebellion\*. King James affected to be the legislative restorer of Ireland. He certainly built on broad foundations, when he introduced so many new people into Ulster, from Scotland, and of *undertakers*, from England†. A new people infused a new spirit of adventure; though such a *project* could not be executed, without the discontent of those, who thought themselves deprived, and wronged. But, the spirit of adventure being once roused, in the north, extended itself to

\* Boate, throughout.

† See the project, for the division, and plantation of Ireland; and Pynnar's Survey of Ulster, 1618.

every

every division of Ireland. One of the ways of gaining wealth, in that age, has produced the disadvantage, and deformity of Ireland, in the present: by *iron-works*, and the export of *lumber*, the country was denuded of its woods\*. Of such an island, it may easily be believed, that many of the exports consisted of the products of husbandry, some coarse manufactures, among which I see no linen cloth, till 1665, and the produce of fishery: There was a great progress in the exports, I perceive, before the 25th of March 1641, with a decline of the timber trade; and an enlargement of the exported products of agriculture, and manufacture. It is perfectly obvious that, forty years of plantation, industry, and quiet, introduced many blessings into Ireland, whatever grievances may have existed, and outcries were made.

But, the rebellion of 1641 ruined all. The cause of that civil war, Petty tells, with his usual penetration, and knowledge, to have been “the desire of the *Romanists* to recover the church revenue, worth about £. 110,000. per annum; and of the common Irish, to get all the Englishmen’s estates; and of the ten, or dozen *grandees* of Ireland, to get the empire of the whole†.” History has re-

\* Boate’s Nat. History. I have now before me a curious document, exhibiting the exports of Ireland, in 1626; whereof were of iron 449 tons; of *lumber* 557 tons; of timber barrel staves 398,400; hoghead staves 409; pipe staves 25,000. The lumber trade of Ireland, in some degree, continued even, in 1669, though persons, who have not looked into original papers, will scarcely believe the fact.

† Pol. Anatomy, 24.

corded the singular events: and Petty, with his accustomed talent, has left us an Estimate of the effects of the rebellion, in *pecuniary value*\*. Yet, even the genius of this singular calculator could not estimate, at least in *pecuniary value*, the personal misery, and popular distress, of that rebellion.

But, the restoration cleared away the clouds, that hung portentous over the fate of Ireland. An act of *settlement*, and *security*, was made, whatever *furious spirits* might wish, or do: and a resolution seems to have been taken, in Shakespeare's words:

" ——— We'll order well the State;

" That like events may ne'er it ruin.

Whether that resolution were kept, whether Ireland were well, or ill governed, history, however written, must tell. One truth is certain, that Ireland will flourish, in the absence of violence, and warfare, of tumult, and rebellion. Ireland, in fact, did flourish, after the restoration, though certainly not so fast, as she would have done, if there had not been all that waste of men, and money, of personal wretchedness, and georgical devastation.

* Political Anatomy: By the loss of people	£. 10,355,000
The loss of their <i>superlucration</i> of soldiers	- - 4,400,000
By ditto of people lost, at £. 10. per head, for	
11 years, deducting 80 m. soldiers	- - - 6,000,000
By impairing the worth of land	- - - 11,000,000
of the stock	- - - 3,500,000
of the housing	- - - 2,000,000

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The total loss - - - - - £. 37,255,000

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From

From very curious documents, which lie before me, I know the yearly amount of that prosperity, as far as it is testified, by her trade, which was more in its total, than it had ever been, in any prior period. In the year, ended on the 25th of December, 1665, the value of the whole imports was £.336,043\*. I am very willing to say, in the *true spirit* of the *Dublin Society*, that £.70,000 worth of tobacco imported might have well been spared, as well as £.50,000 worth of wine. But, people will consume whatever they want, whatever societies may say, or legislators may enact. During the same year, the value of the exports of Ireland amounted to £.358,077†. To those details, were annexed some observations, which are here subjoined; as they illustrate the domestic economy of Ireland, in 1665. Of all those exports about a moiety were sent to England; as live cattle, sheep, wool, linen, and yarn, with some other particulars: and, of the

\* The value of imports, from England, was of the amount of £.200,450; and, from Foreign countries, £.135,593; making in all, £.336,043.

† Of that sum the value of the products of Irish agriculture amounted to		- - - - -	£.309,808
Of linen cloth	- £.590	} - - - - -	17,975
Of linen yarn	- 17,385		
Of manufactured iron	- - - - -	- - - - -	1,116
Of wood	- - - - -	- - - - -	2,384
Of skins (wild animals)	- - - - -	- - - - -	2,687
Of fish	- - - - -	- - - - -	24,107

The total exports	- - - - -	£.358,077
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other exports, not above a fourth went to foreign parts. We may see above how many of the whole exports were the products of agriculture, including some woollen goods; being about two-thirds of the whole\*. The other third consisted of wood, skins, iron, linen, and fish. More fish, they could have spared to the world, if they had had more people, nets, and other materials, to make them†.

Before the year 1681, the amount of the Irish exports had risen, from £. 358,077 to £. 582,814; and the imports from £. 336,043 to £. 433,040. Such was the over-sea trade of Ireland, during the corrupt reign of Charles II‡. But, there were no insurrections,

\* The whole value of the products of agriculture, in 1665, we have just seen was - - - - - £. 309,808

In 1785, they amounted to - - - - - 1,623,463  
Such being the increase of this most important branch of industry, during 120 years!

† Those documents, I found in the Paper-office; having been sent to Mr. Secretary Williamson, by Sir Peter Pett.

‡ A little detail will sufficiently illustrate the domestic circumstances of those times: In 1669, the Irish Revenue let, during several years then past, at per annum, for £. 219,500

In 1683, the gross revenue amounted to - - - 300,280

In 1684, the same - - - - - 319,167

In 1685, the same - - - - - 317,962

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The cash, thus paid into the exchequer,

amounted to - - - - - £. 798,628

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Which, at a medium, was, yearly, net - - £. 266,209

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These

insurrections, to obstruct the progress of industry; or to withdraw the people, from their useful labours: and while the interest of money was settled at 10 per cent. they struggled with their want of commercial capital, which, in the absence of banks, is the great want, in the infancy of every people.

While Ireland was thus prosperous, in her domestic affairs, however corrupt, and violent her government might be, the revolution occurred, in England, and a rebellion broke out, in Ireland. King James II. driven from England, at length found refuge in Ireland. The warfare, and devastation, which now distracted, and ruined a wretched people, ceased in October 1691, by the capitulation of Limerick. These causes had the most baneful effects on the domestic industry, and foreign trade of Ireland, whatever influx of money there may have been, from England, and France, for paying the contending armies. Peace at home had, however, brought with it an increase of the cattle, and sheep, which had been destroyed, and neglected, during those sad confusions, which were followed, by forfeitures, and by emigrations\*. The treaty of Ryfwick, in July 1697, put an end to the obstructions, from war abroad: and,

These details concur with the representations of Petty, in showing how few people, how little wealth, what small industry, and what inconsiderable trade, existed, during those times, in Ireland.

\* The following Statement of the Revenue of Ireland exhibits a true delineation of the wretched effects of those disastrous times:

There

and, the industry of Ireland, which had been debilitated, by so many causes, began to revive, and to exert its renovated powers of reproduction. We may perceive the happy effects, in the following Statement:

	Of Exports.	Of Imports.
In 1697, there were	£. 525,004	£. 423,182
In 1698, —————	996,305	576,863
—————	—————	—————

An accurate eye may perceive, in those statements, how much the cessation from war promoted the languid exports of Ireland; how little the want of wealth, after those sad distractions, and the absence of manufactures, promoted the imports. It is but an ill judged mode of estimate, to consider the amount of the value of *imports* to be the measure of a country's prosperity. Arthur Dobbs perceived, that "from the peace of Ryswick, Europe began to breathe, after a heavy war, and trade to revive, which occasioned a brisker demand for Irish provisions\*." The intelligent Dobbs now goes on to tell, how much the Irish woollen trade was obstructed, by the injudicious regulations of the English Parliament; how many manufacturers were obliged to

There were only collected,

	Of gross Rev.	Of Inland Excise.
In 1689 —	£. 8,834	— £. 2,930
In 1690 —	87,388	— 28,724
In 1691 —	201,160	— 59,608
In 1692 —	238,824	— 64,478
In 1693 —	224,131	— 76,237
In 1694 —	232,846	— 64,303
—————	—————	—————

\* Essay on Trade, 6.

emigrate;

emigrate; and how much gain must otherwise have been made, that would at last have centered in England\*.

But, let us turn our attention, from the dreary waste of war, to the more exhilarating views of domestic meliorations, during a century of renovated populoufness, increased industry, and augmented capital.

According to a *three* years average of the Exports, and Imports of Ireland, ended with 1701, the

	Val. Exports.	Val. Imports.
Amount was - - -	£. 779,109	£. 726,559
A three years average, ending with 1751, was -	1,856,605	1,497,437
A three years average, ending with 1801, was -	4,100,526	5,591,503

Such, then, is the animating view, which those results furnish of the rich effects of Irish industry, during a century of domestic contestation, and foreign war. It will extend our prospect a little, if with those, who consider, that the gains of import are as great, as those of export; and that the amount of the whole over-sea trade is best seen in the amount, both of the value of exports, and of imports, added toge-

\* The import and export trade, between England and Ireland, did certainly languish, during the years 1700, 1701, and 1702, as we may learn, from the custom-house books of London; and began to revive in 1703, notwithstanding the war, which, whatever Dobbs might say, is rather favourable to the *provision* trade, owing to the greater demand.



ther, we view both. Now; the total value of both, according to a three years average, ending

	Total trade.
With 1701, amounted to - - -	£. 1,505,668
The three years average, ending with	
1751, was - - - - -	3,554,042
The three years average, ending with	
1801, was - - - - -	9,691,029

Such, then, is the more accurate amount of the Irish over-sea trade, at those three epochs, at the distance of half a century, from each other; as the custom-house registers testify. Every one, who understands common arithmetic, knows, that three are more than one; and that nine are equal to three times three. The first fifty years appears, in its value, to be one multiplied by three; and the second to be three multiplied by three, nearly: and there can be no doubt, then, whether Ireland had not prospered greatly, in her commercial affairs, in the hundred years, which ended with 1800, the epoch of her union. In considering this interesting topic, from those three averages only, without taking in collateral circumstances, we are wholly freed, from the embarrassment, of regarding, who were, meantime, the viceroys, or ministers, or persons governing, or patriots opposing: we have merely before our eyes, and understandings, *the people themselves*. It certainly required many more people, to carry on the commercial business of Ireland, in the last period, than in the first: it required more people, with more industry, and skill; and it required more people, with

with more industry, skill, and *capital*. In 1700, Ireland had but few people, little industry, and skill, and still less capital\*. During the effluxion of a century of wars, of disputes, and convulsions, Ireland acquired many people, more industry, more skill, and much more capital. And, whence did she obtain the people, the industry, the skill, and the capital, which produced, in 1800, so great a trade, as the value of £. 9,691,029? The answer must be, from her own powers of *reproduction*. And, we thus, incidentally, perceive, how little Ireland owes, during that century of acquirement, either to her persons, in power, or to her patriots, out of power. This moral truth is of the greatest importance, not only to Ireland, but to every country, which is running that race of industry, how much the people owe to their own efforts, and how little to the intermeddling of others.

It may cast some additional light on this interesting subject, if we take the average exports, and imports of Ireland, at shorter periods of her advance; in order to review those several topicks, as we advance. We have seen the amount of the over-sea trade of Ireland, according to a three years medium, ending in 1701, to be no more than £. 779,109 of exports, and of imports, £. 726,559. The very prospect of war, in 1702, lessened the first, to £. 493,435, and

\* It is here proper to recollect, that the legal interest of money, in Ireland, was reduced, in 1704, from *ten* per cent. to *eight*; in 1722, to *seven*; and in 1732, to *six* per cent. Those several reductions imply, that wealth, and capital, began to increase, with the numbers of the people, and their industry.

the latter, to £.475,158. They did not recover their several values, during the preceding peace, throughout the nine subsequent years of war. The peace of Utrecht, whatever might be its political value, brought great relief to the depressed trade of Ireland, after such protracted hostilities. The years 1714, and 1715, were periods of unexampled commerce, in Ireland. And the augmented amount, in those prosperous years, both of the exports, and imports, arose, from an uncommon traffic with Holland, and Flanders, Portugal, and Spain, France and her dominions. According to Dobbs, 1715 was the happiest year of her commerce, when her exports surmounted the imports by £. 557,068. If we take the years 1713, 1714, and 1715, as the epoch of the accession of George I. we shall perceive, from the

Average value of both, the	Exports.	Imports.
amount to have been -	£. 1,280,810	£. 882,829
Compare these with the		
average of 1726-7-8 -	1,035,577	916,895

And these last years represent the trade of Ireland, at the accession of George II; the amount both of the exports, and imports, at the first epoch, being £. 2,163,639; and at the last epoch £. 1,952,472. Dobbs is not happy, in accounting, for the flatness, and defalcation, of the trade of Ireland, during the intermediate period, to the fluctuations of her domestic manufactures. No: they were more owing to the uncertainties, in other countries, of peace, and  
of

of war; to the stockjobbing both in France, and England, which affected private credit: yet, must it be recollected, that England was the great, and steady customer of Ireland, either in peace, or war, in her prosperity, or depression. One truth is certain, as we know, from subsequent facts, that the Irish people, with their industry, and their capitals, held their onward course, without much interruption, from whatever cause. We might infer this truth, from a view of the exports, and imports, of Ireland, before the war of 1738 began, and after it ended: and, these views are exhibited in the average value of

		Exports.	Imports.
The three years	1736}		
	1737}	£.1,232,446	£951,548
	1738}		
And in the three years	1749}		
	1750}	1,858,606	1,497,437
	1751}	<u>                    </u>	<u>                    </u>

Throughout that long war, which ended by the treaty of Aix la Chapelle, there was no interruption to the industry of Ireland; to the course of her gains; or to the augmentation of her capital: throughout those protracted, and rather inglorious hostilities, the over-sea trade of Ireland was little interrupted by those events, whether happy, or adverse: the reason may be, that her best, and chief customer was Britain: and we might safely infer, both the augmentation of her people, and their enterprize, as well as the progress of their traffic abroad, from the vast flow of their exports, and imports, in the three fortunate



nate years, ending with 1751, which indeed formed an epoch of great prosperity, in Britain, which so greatly influenced the prosperity of Ireland. In Ireland, indeed, her prosperous state ended, soon after, in a parliamentary dispute, about the application of the surpluses of her revenue. The Commons, who held the strings of the public purse, applied those surpluses to domestic meliorations: bridges, and canals, and mills were formed; and manufactures were incited, and pushed forward, by every sort of encouragement, which the projectors, with public money, in their power, could propose. The effects were soon seen, and felt. The exports of 1755 rose, in their vast value, to £.2,047,660, while the imports amounted to the sum of £.1,711,552. Invigorated as Ireland was, by those means, she scarcely felt any interruptions to her industry, and gains, from the war of 1756.

For Ireland, as well as, for Great Britain, the new reign auspiciously opened, in 1760. New encouragements were constantly given, while no obstructions were imposed. And the private gains of industry went on with the reduplications of money, let at usurious interest. We may see sufficient proofs of the salutary effects, if we compare the average values of the exports, and imports, in the three years ending with 1762, with those ending, in 1772: The amount of

	Exports.	Imports.
The first period was	£.2,274,422	£.1,696,764
The second period was	3,302,576	2,415,785

During

During those years, the exports to Great Britain, which was her greatest, and her best market, were prodigious, while the British plantations formed the next greatest markets, as well for the suppliers of materials, as the furnishers of necessaries, physical, and acquired. The colonial war began, in 1775, wherein the British Americans defied the power, embarrassed the policy, and obstructed the commerce of Great Britain: the British Americans were allowed to do so; because the parent State would not put forth her strength, use her policy, or urge her traffic. The Irish factions took advantage of her various embarrassments; and they demanded, in 1779, a *free trade*, without having, perhaps, any very precise idea of the real meaning of a *free trade*. Their demands were granted; as indeed concessions had already been made, without so much peremptoriness of requisition\*. And yet whatever freedom  
of

\* By the 18 Geo. III. ch. 55, certain goods were allowed to be exported, directly, from Ireland into the British plantations, in America, and to the British settlements, in Africa; and Irish built ships were declared to be entitled to the same privileges, as British. By the 18 Geo. III. ch. 61, Papists were relieved, from the disability of holding estates, in Ireland. By the 19th Geo. III. ch. 35, tobacco of Irish growth was allowed to be imported into Britain. By the 19th Geo. III. ch. 37, bounties on the importation of Irish hemp were granted. By the 20th Geo. III. ch. 6, restraints on the export of woollen drapery, and glass, from Ireland, were repealed. By the 20th Geo. III. ch. 10, a free trade, with the British settlements, in America, with the British West Indies, and British settlements in Africa, was allowed. By the 20th Geo. III. ch. 18, the Turkey trade was laid open to the Irish people; and by the same statute, gold,

of trade was thus granted to such requisitions, the commerce of Ireland languished during the years 1780, 1781, and 1782: the fact is, however men may talk about freedom of trade, and whatever may be granted to the vehemence of their requests; without adequate capital, enlargement of enterprize, and the diffusion of correspondence, commerce cannot be much extended. This truth will appear with sufficient clearness, by comparing the average values of the exports, and imports, during the free trade of the years 1780-81-82, with the restrained trade of 1770-71-72:

	Exports.	Imports.
Those of 1770-71-72 amounted to	£.3,302,576	£.2,415,785
Those of 1780-81-82        -        -	3,102,938	2,748,293

The last, indeed, was a period of extended warfare; while the former was a period of unrestrained quiet. The exports, and imports, of the subsequent years, 1784 and 1785, did somewhat surpass the commerce of 1770-1-2, after the United States had opened their guilty ports to the Irish trade\*.

The

and silver, were allowed to be exported to Ireland. Such, then, was the *free trade*, which was thus granted to the Irish traders, by those successive laws!

\* There may be mentioned a measure, or two, which possibly had some influence on the domestic economy, at least on the agriculture of Ireland; Her House of Lords having under consideration, in 1757, the state of *tillage*, came to several resolutions: that the consumption of Dublin has the most extensive influence on the *tillage* of Ireland; the consumption being 200,000 barrels of wheat, (300 lbs. weight of flour being equal

to

The concession of a *free trade* was meantime followed, in 1782, by the demand of a *free constitution*. This demand was as inconsiderately granted, by the one side, as it had been positively required by the other\*. Beyond the factiousness of the Irish statesmen, and the weakness of the British, political folly could not go. Every thing was thus granted by Great Britain; but nothing was granted, in return, by Ireland. These requisitions, and concessions, contained no adjustment of any thing, till they were followed, in 1785, by the *Irish arrangements*, for settling something like consistency, in commerce, between the two independent kingdoms: But, they were not very strongly urged on the one side, and declined on the other. If impolicy, or forbearance, had not been the resolutions of Great

to two barrels of wheat;) 2dly, it was resolved, that bounties be granted, on the land carriage of corn to Dublin. It appears that, during the five years, which elapsed with 1757, that there had been brought to the Dublin market,

Of home product	-	-	-	404,825 barrels.
Of foreign product	-	-	-	594,312 barrels.
				<hr/>
				999,137 barrels.

In 1774, the King was thanked, for giving his assent to a bill in favour of tillage.—Lords Journals, vol. 4, 101—772.

\* By the 22d Geo. III. ch. 53, the act 6 Geo. I. for securing the dependance of Ireland, was simply repealed; by the 23d Geo. III. ch. 28, appeals, from the courts of Ireland, to Great Britain, were also relinquished. And, in return for both those statutes, relinquishing the dependance of Ireland, nothing was obtained, or demanded: nor was there any arrangement of pretensions, or any treaty.



Britain, during those factious times, the proper measures, arising out of the existing circumstances, had been to resolve : since Ireland has thus acquired independence, without any return of benefit, or appearance of quiet, the people of Ireland shall be deemed *aliens* ; their ships shall be *alien* ; their trade shall be subject to *alien* duties ; as *aliens*, they shall not be admitted into the British colonies ; nor partake of the British fisheries. Such resolutions, which were the necessary inferences, from such assumptions, would have ruined the agriculture, and manufactures, the commerce, and circulation of Ireland, in a month ; so much did all these depend on her daily communications with Great Britain. In return, for that forbearance, Ireland, actuated by her usual charlatans ;

“ As charlatans can do no good,

“ Until they're mounted in a crowd ;

assumed, in 1789, during a melancholy moment, a distinct government, from that of Great Britain. During some years, there followed extravagancies, which ended at length, in the rebellion of 1798, upon the avowed principle of *entire separation*. But, the wretched men, who now drew their swords, on such a principle, and with such a purpose, were not more rebellious, than the Irish orators, who moved the vote of independence, in 1782 ; and snatched the sceptre, from the King's hands, in 1789. All men at length saw, from such proceedings, that, between complete union, and positive separation, there

there was no middle state. And, the year 1800 will always be deemed, in the annals of the British empire, the happy epoch of an incorporate Union, which had been settled upon equal mediums, conducted by prudent management, and consummated by the wise legislation of the two independent kingdoms\*.

Meantime, the people of Ireland held their onward course, in the progress of their industry, and the enterprize of their traffic, whatever might be the factiousness, or imbecility of statesmen, on either side the Irish channel. The Irish people increased their numbers, enlarged their commerce, augmented their gains, and reduplicated their capital. All these statements, we might infer, from a comparison of the exports, and imports, of the three years, ending with 1782, with the three years, ending with 1792 :

	Exports.	Imports.
The 3 years average of the first period was	£3,102,938	£2,248,292
The 3 years average of the second period was	5,125,934	4,164,985

This detail exhibits a commercial comparison of the three last years of a most disastrous war, with the three last years of a most advantageous peace. During that period, Great Britain, and Ireland, were equally prosperous. The unexampled amount of the over-sea trade, which is shown by the statement, ending with 1792, evinces that, it was in Ireland, as well as in Great Britain, a period of uncommon prosperity, which did not last long. As early as 1792, and as late as 1802, a spirit of disaffection, which was followed, in many districts of

\* 39-40 Geo. III. ch. 67.

Ireland, by popular disturbances, and traiterous insurrection, affected her quiet, and interrupted her industry\*. A foreign war began, in 1793, which, like all former hostilities, introduced many obstructions, from abroad: two fruitless attempts were meantime made to invade Ireland, from France; and one invasion, under Humbert, took place, which, for a while, perturbed a country, that was sufficiently prone to insurrection. In 1798, indeed, those disturbances ended in avowed, and inveterate rebellion, which was attended with waste of property to the amount of a million at least. And the debility of public, and private credit, in England, during those unhappy times, was no doubt felt, strongly, in Ireland. And, the accustomed influences of all those causes had the certain effects of lessening the exports, and augmenting the imports, of the years 1798, 1799, and 1800, the noted years of rebellion, and of union: So that the average values of the export and import trade of Ireland, according to a three years average, amounted to £.4,164,082 of exports, and £.5,387,687,689 of imports†.

Some additional light, may be thrown on the origin, and progress of the industry, commerce, and wealth, of Ireland, by taking some other views of

\* The Report of the Committee of Secrecy of the House of Lords in Ireland; and the Parliamentary Proceedings of the United Parliament, 1802.

† The same debility, and diminution, might be proved, from the registered number of shipping, which belonged to Ireland, in the prosperous year 1792, and the disadvantageous year 1800: In the first year, Ireland had 1193 ships, carrying 69,567 tons; and in the second, only 1003 ships, bearing 54,262 tons.

her commercial affairs: For 250 years together, from the time of Edward III. saith Sir John Davies, the Irish customs did not exceed £.1000 a year: for, the subsidy of poundage was not then known; and the greatest custom did arise, from the coquet of hydes. A pretty accurate idea of the progress of commerce, and of opulence, in England, and in Ireland, may be obtained, by tracing distinctly the the several settlements of the legal interest of money, in both those countries\*.

Another view of this interesting subject may be taken, from tracing the currencies of Ireland, at different periods of her progress. Before the reign of Edward IV. the legal value of money, in England, and Ireland, was quite equal. But, in that reign, this convenient equality was altered, by an absurd regulation, which created a difference of a fourth part; the Irish shilling being worth but 9*d.* in England; and the English shilling passing in Ireland, for 16*d.*: So that £.100 English made

\* The legal interest of money was settled, successively, as under:

England.		Ireland.	
In 1546	- at 10 per cent.	In 1635	- at 10 per cent.
In 1623	- at 8 per cent.	In 1704	- at 8 per cent.
In 1660	- at 6 per cent.	In 1727	- at 7 per cent.
In 1713	- at 5 per cent.	In 1732	- at 6 per cent.

At which it remains.

At which it remains, though an attempt was made, in 1788, to reduce the interest to 5 per cent: This rate was imposed on the Bank of Ireland, by its charter.



£.133 6s. 8d. in Ireland; or in other words, £.33 6s. 8d. per cent. made the exchange at par, between the two countries. This difference of values, between English, and Irish money, continued till 1637, when it was taken away; and all payments of crown rents, leases, and other charges, and contracts, *at that time subsisting*, were, by a deduction of a fourth part, reduced into English value: and hence, the legal value of money became again the same, in England, and Ireland. Thus, it continued till the Revolution. But, James II. coming soon after to Ireland, by a proclamation, in 1689, raised the English shilling to 13d. and during the subsequent confusions, the same shilling rose to 14d. in 1694, when the value of it had fallen in England: but, from that fictitious rate, it was reduced to 13d. in 1701. The regulation of the current value of gold, in Ireland, was settled, by the legal value of the English shilling: and, this being higher, in Ireland, than in Britain, as 13 to 12; the legal, or extrinsic value of money is fixed higher, in the one kingdom, than in the other: so that £.100 English is £.108 6s. 8d. in Ireland; or in other words,  $8\frac{1}{3}$ , from thenceforth, made the par of exchange, between the two countries\*. Such then, is the history of the *par of exchange* between England, and Ireland, which, we may perceive, is wholly artificial, without any connection either with the natural or mercantile exchanges, between those countries. It is, at the same time, curious to observe, that the before-mentioned periods of prosperity, or of depression, were noted equally for steady, or un-

\* Robison's Essay on Coins.

steady exchanges, between London, and Dublin\*. The greatest part of the cash circulating, in Ireland, is the coin of England.

Meantime, the Bank of Ireland was established, in 1783, on a capital of £. 600,000†. It was followed, and imitated, by some Bank, which issued cash notes, in almost every hamlet, in that country. When the Bank of England was restrained, in 1797, from paying in gold, and silver, the Bank of Ireland was soon after restrained, from paying in cash; and the private Banks could not pay their notes, in bullion, when the public Banks were restrained. The exchange, which had been flat, in 1794, and 1795, began to rise in 1796, and a part of 1797. It began to rise in 1799, and continued remarkably high, in 1800, in 1801, and 1802; and rose to a great height, in 1803, and 1804; and when it advanced to 20 per cent. it induced Parliamentary enquiry, early in 1804. The Committee of Enquiry attributed

\* The following exchanges, in London, on Dublin, justify that remark:

In 1748—January	-	$8\frac{7}{8}$	In 1790—January	-	$8\frac{1}{4}$
July	-	$8\frac{1}{2}$	July	-	$8\frac{1}{2}$
In 1749—January	-	$8\frac{5}{8}$	In 1791—January	-	$8\frac{1}{4}$
July	-	$8\frac{1}{2}$	July	-	$8\frac{1}{2}$
In 1750—January	-	$8\frac{1}{2}$	In 1792—January	-	$8\frac{3}{4}$
July	-	$9\frac{1}{4}$	July	-	9
<hr/>					
In 1771—January	-	$9\frac{1}{4}$	† The exchanges then were:		
July	-	$9\frac{1}{4}$			
In 1772—January	-	$8\frac{1}{4}$	In 1783—January	-	10
July	-	$9\frac{1}{2}$	July	-	$8\frac{3}{4}$
In 1773—January	-	11			
July	-	10			

this

this unexampled rise, in the exchanges, to two causes; to the unnecessary restriction, from paying in bullion, which was imposed by law, on the Bank of Ireland; and to the over issue of paper; while the real balance of payments was in favour of Ireland\*. The Committee regretted, that they could not offer to the House any remedy, for such a grievance†. But, the enquiry itself was a remedy, by laying open the

\* Report of the Committee of Enquiry. There is a fact, or two, which seems to have escaped the vigilance of the Committee: The secret artifices of the Irish Directory of the United Irishmen, directed their people "to prevent the circulation of bank notes." See the Report of the Secret Committee of the House of Commons of Ireland, App. N<sup>o</sup> 28. The other fact is, that in 1804, at Belfast, there was an obvious preference given to the notes of *the country banks of Scotland* over the notes of the Bank of Ireland: at that time, and place, gold could not be procured for Bank of Ireland notes, under a discount of *one shilling per pound*; while the notes of the Scots banks were exchanged for gold, at only 4*d.* in the pound; the difference of 1*d.* in every shilling being always calculated to bring the two currencies to *the par*. This is an extremely curious fact; arising partly from the intrigues of the United Irishmen, and partly from the real preference of the Scots bank notes, in the North of Ireland.

† Some very adequate remedies were, however, applied to the defective circulation, and to the unfavourable exchanges of Ireland, by the British Government: useful coins were introduced there in the place of depreciated paper:

There were circulated, by the Bank, stamped

dollars at 6/. of the value of	-	-	-	£. 232,352
Silver tokens, of the value of	-	-	-	848,404
Copper coins, of the value of	-	-	-	124,706

The total circulated	-	-	£. 1,205,462
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causes

causes of the evil. When the wretched hopes of the United Irishmen were dashed by the Union; when peace was again restored; when the industry, and trade of Ireland began to flow, in their usual channels; the exchanges returned to near their usual par: add to those causes, that the Bank of Ireland wisely issued large numbers of stamped dollars, and also circulated 600 tons of copper coins\*.

We have now seen that, with the prosperity of Ireland, the exchanges are not higher, or more unsteady, than they might be expected, during such times, and under such circumstances. Whatever may have been, in the days of Malynes, and Missenden, under James I. there are obviously now three kinds of exchange: the natural exchange, which consists in the expence of carrying money, from one country to another; the commercial exchange; and the political exchange, consisting of the remittances for public purposes, exclusive of private dealings. In these views of the subject, the efforts, which have been made, and are making, for shortening the roads, securing bridges, enlarging harbours, and facilitating the passages, between Great Britain and Ireland, are of the greatest importance; as the risque, and expence of conveying money, must be thereby

\* Before the end of the year 1804, the exchange with Dublin, at London, had fallen to 11 per cent. *Lloyd's List*. It rose, in the subsequent year; and stood in December 1805, at  $13\frac{1}{4}$ . It fell, in 1806; and stood, in December of that year at  $11\frac{3}{4}$  to 12. In March 1807, it was as low, as  $10\frac{3}{4}$ ; and towards the end of the year it fixed at  $10\frac{1}{4}$ . In February 1809, it was as low as  $8\frac{1}{2}$  and 8; and stood in December 1809, at  $9\frac{1}{2}$ . In 1810, it has been very steady from  $9\frac{1}{2}$  to  $9\frac{3}{4}$ . *Wettenhall's Lists*.



lessened, and correspondence promoted; as well as the intercourse, and the Union, thereby very much improved.

Yet; is it made a question, by those writers, who come forward to instruct the dullards of Great Britain, on the affairs of Ireland, whether the commerce of Ireland has prospered, or withered, since the Union, in 1801; whether the Irish people have any thing to congratulate themselves upon, since the Union. To such wailings, it may be allowed, that there is nothing mystical in the word *Union*, or in the thing. Honest Dobbs had, indeed, opened his well-meaning Essay, by remarking that, "trade unites in interest and affection, the most distant nations:" and, what people ever rejected the sincere offer of friendly commerce, but *United Irishmen*, who, hyena-like, are no more capable of amity, than she is; and who, with the same wildness, possess her subtilty, and malice. The free trade, which was allowed to Ireland, in 1779, 1780, and 1781, was merely given, under qualifications; and might have been reclaimed from independent Ireland. *The Union* conferred on Ireland a *free trade*, without any qualification, in the same manner as the English, and Scottish people enjoy *free trade*. But, I never heard, that the statesmen, who made the Union of 1800, secretly promised to transfer any part of the commercial capital of Great Britain to Ireland, whatever the Lord Lieutenant may have silently engaged, without authority. Now; it is very possible for a people to be entitled to a free trade, without possessing the means of carrying it on. The year, when the Union commenced, was still  
marked

marked by its revolutionary state\*. It was the last year of a lengthened war: and, 1801 was the epoch of the protracted treaty of Amiens. Add to those causes of depression the derangement of the exchanges of Ireland, during the successive years, 1801-2-3 and 1804†. Can it, then, be matter of wonder among well informed persons, that the over-sea trade of Ireland should languish, for some time, after *the Union* began; there being nothing of *enchantment*, either in the *word*, or the *thing*. After this introduction, let us now examine the public accounts, which are kept, and produced, for the very purpose of ascertaining the fact, and preventing delusion :

	Ir. Exports.	Ir. Imports.	Tot. of both.
The three years average of the years 1798, 1799, 1800, were - - -	£.4,164,082	£.5,387,689	£.9,551,771
D° 1801, 1802, 1803 - - - -	4,754,676	5,456,453	10,211,129
D° 1804, 1805, 1806 - - - -	5,131,208	5,769,03	10,900,243
D° 1807, 1808, 1809 - - - -	5,710,203‡	7,079,611	12,789,814

Such, then, is the prosperous state of the over-sea trade of Ireland ; as it appears, in this accurate

\* It is a fact, which is stated by the writers, who utter their wailings, under the seductive form of instruction, that “ on the 25th of March 1805, there were no fewer than 1,474 persons confined, on suspicion, in different prisons, and in the prison ships of Ireland.” So obstinate a passion is *United Irishism*, when it operates on gross ignorance.

† App. A. 1. to the Report on the Circulation of Ireland.

‡ The real value of the Irish produce, and manufactures, which were exported, in the year ended the 5th of January 1810, computed, at the average prices current, amounted to £.11,464,265.

detail :

detail: and, from it, we may perceive, that Ireland enjoyed the exported value of £. 1,546,121 more, in the ninth year of the Union, than in the year before it commenced, by a progressive increase in every period: and, from a similar comparison, we may see, that the imports, in the last period, were superior to the imports of the former, in £. 1,691,922: but, the whole over-sea trade of Ireland was greater, in the last period, than it was, when the Union was made, by £. 3,238,043 a year. What is there, then, in these comparative statements, but what may encourage wise men, though they frighten those fools of Ireland, who are studious to instruct more intelligent men, than themselves. The excess of the imports over the exports is, however, the great *remora*. The *balance of trade* used, in former times, while the *mercantile system* was the great object of attention, in England. Josua Gee, a pragmatistical quaker, by publishing the most absurd details of the national trade, threw the whole people into a panic terror. Mr. Hume wrote his fine Essay on the *Balance of Trade*, to remove those terrors of ruination, by the export of the whole coins of the country. And his conclusion, that the coins may be left to find their own currency, while the people, with their industry, remain, gave great comfort to every one, except to those, who delight to be told, that they are ruined. In the mean time, the over-sea trade of Great Britain rose in the value of its exports from £. 12,599,112, according to the average of 1749-50-51, to 24,905,200, in 1792, to £. 50,301,763, in 1809. The value of the whole exports



exports of Ireland, as we have seen, was only £.779,109, in 1701; £.1,854,605, in 1751; £.4,100,526, in 1801, and £.5,739,843, in 1809. Now; it is quite evident to all, who are capable of reasoning on such subjects, that it required both, in Ireland, and in Britain, more people and industry, more capital and enterprize, to export the cargoes of 1809, in both, than the cargoes of 1801, of 1751, or 1701: And, whence did the inhabitants of both derive all those augmentations of enterprize and capital, of industry and people? The answer must be; from their own powers of reproduction.

But, since no one, in trade, ever does any thing, for nothing: so the traders of Ireland, both importers, and retailers, who were concerned in the great cargoes imported, in the three years, ending with 1800, of the same, ending with 1803, of the same, ending with 1806, of the same, ending with 1809, must have gained their usual profits on such vast transactions: and do not the gains of the whole people collectively arise from the gains of the individuals separately? Undoubtedly. The persons owning, and navigating the many ships, which imported those great cargoes, at those successive epochs, had their profits, the merchant importers had their profits, and the brokers, and retailers, had their several profits. What boots it, then, whether those profits be made on the imports, or exports? If there be an *excess* of imports must not the overplus be paid for, in bullion? Yes: but, we will suppose, that the bullion was sent out, to import cotton wool, raw silk, or flax seed, will not all materials of manufactures be wrought into something, whereon there  
may



may be gained *cent. per cent.* of the first purchase money. Such were the doctrines of Child, Petty, and D'Avenant, a hundred and twenty years ago. And the whole doctrine of a balance of trade was exploded, till it was revived, by that facetious, and logical gentleman, the late Mr. Alderman Falkener of Dublin; and continued, by those Irish writers, who are studious to instruct the good people of England, on such recondite topicks. And those writers threw out their insidious sarcasm, "how little reason the people of Ireland have to congratulate themselves upon the Union, with reference to the *balance of trade*," though the instructive evidence of the Inspector of Imports and Exports, the very well informed Mr. Marshall, before the Exchange Committee, flashed conviction in their eyes\*. Such writers ought to remember, that the best possible

\* The Inspector General, by an accurate estimate, from the real prices of the imports, and exports of Ireland, proved, that there was a balance, in her favour, in the year ending with January 1803, of £.1,816,114; being the excess of the exports, amounting to £.9,020,982, over the imports, amounting to £.7,194,868. *Rep. Com.* 127. The real value of the Irish produce, and manufactures, which were exported, in the year ending on the 5th of January 1810, computed at the average prices current, amounted to £.11,464,265. *Inspect. Gen. Report.* The imports, according to the 3 years average, ending with 1809, amounted only to £.7,079,611. The writers, then, who persecute us, with their information, or impertinence, would do well to be silent on the *balance of trade*, lest they be told,

" The happy whimsey they pursue,  
 " Till they at length believe it true;  
 " Caught by their own delusive art,  
 " They fancy first, and then assert.

mode

mode of giving instructions to the people of Britain is not by propagating gross perversion, or intimating insidious sarcasm. The researches of the Exchange Committee, in 1804, ought to have steeped in forgetfulness the senses of such writers, on the delusory score of balance of trade, as evidenced by the mere exports, and imports, which the ablest writers have derided, as too vague for useful deductions.

It gives a much more important result, to investigate the actual shipping, which were employed, in the *inward*, and the *outward* trade, between Great Britain and Ireland, at the Union, and afterward, by taking four periods, of three years average each, beginning with the years 1798, 1799, and 1800 :

	Inwards.		Outwards.		The Total.	
	Ships.	Tons.	Ships.	Tons.	Ships.	Tons.
Average of 1798, 1799, 1800	5,634	494,292	6,584	534,749	12,218	1,029,041
of 1801, 1802, 1803	5,708	480,274	5,528	466,365	11,236	946,639
of 1804, 1805, 1806	6,357	546,301	6,491	562,595	12,848	1,108,896
of 1807, 1808, 1809	7,001	584,557	6,895	609,652	13,896	1,194,209

Such is the evidence of the commercial intercourse, between Great Britain and Ireland, at, and after, the Union between them, as given from the Register of Britain; amounting in the last period, more than in the first, to 1,678 voyages, carrying 195,168 tons: yet, it is important, to enquire what number of shipping was employed of late, in carrying on the whole over-sea trade of Ireland; we shall ascertain

this point, with sufficient accuracy, by taking a three years average, of the inward, and outward shipping, from the Register of Ireland :

	Inwards.		Outwards.		The Totals.	
	Ships.	Tons.	Ships.	Tons.	Ships.	Tons.
Average of 3 Years } 1807, 1808, 1809 }	8,532	789,509	7,937	755,926	16,468	1,545,435

Such, then, are the whole voyages, with the quantity of tonnage, which were required, for the augmented commerce of Ireland, in the ninth year of the Union. The tonnage of the British shipping is nearly  $\frac{4}{5}$  of the whole ; the Irish tonnage is rather less than the  $\frac{1}{7}$  of the whole ; and the foreign tonnage, even amidst such a war, is rather more than  $\frac{1}{15}$  of the whole. It will open another view of this interesting subject, if we inquire what shipping Ireland, which has never been very famous for naval affairs, actually possessed, both before, and after, the Union : In fact, there were registered, as belonging to the several Irish ports,

during 1798	-	-	1,025 ships,	bearing	49,998 tons
1799	-	-	999	-	49,825
<hr/>					
during 1808	-	-	1,104	-	58,959
1809	-	-	1,119	-	69,979
<hr/>					

Whether we review the value of the exports, and imports of Ireland, both before, and after, the Union ;  
or

or consider the augmented number of annual voyages, for carrying those cargoes, since that event, or the increase of the number of Irish ships, during the nine years of the Union, we may perceive how little foundation there was, for saying, “the commercial prosperity has very visibly declined, since that measure was carried into effect.” The writer, who talks thus, with the public registers, before his eyes, only disparages his own understanding; and warns his readers not to believe him, even when he does speak truth. That assertion was made, by the writer, who has studiously inculcated how many more people now inhabit Ireland, than formerly; how much more wages the industrious people there have at present than formerly; how much *the rental* of Ireland has risen, since the cessation of treason, privy conspiracy, and rebellion: and, when in addition to those instructive circumstances, he perceives, as the necessary results, augmented consumption, and productive taxation, he instructs his reader, as a just conclusion, from the most egregious sophistry, how much the trade of Ireland has declined, since the Union. However loquacious he is, on this topick, he does not inform us, after exhibiting an augmented rental, what is the price of land in Ireland, since the Union. The well informed A. Young, however, assures us, from an average of the price of land, in every county of Ireland, that it sold, when he visited that country, at one and twenty years purchase\*. From all the inquiries,

† See the App. sect. iii, to his Irish Tour, 1776-7-8, and brought down to the end of 1779.



which I have lately made, as to this important point, I am led to believe, that the present price of lands, in Ireland, is five and twenty years purchase, which is the necessary result, of more quiet, greater prosperity, and more indisputable title : yet, are we told, by the same writer, that all this is “ but an illusive “ prospect of future good.” Of such illusive folly enough !

I cannot, however, concur with M. D'Ivernois, that the late prosperity of Ireland has arisen from the effects of the Berlin decree : No : I will maintain, that Ireland has flourished, since the Union, in *spite* of the Berlin decree. Former wars with France had a sort of magnanimity in them, that softened the rigours of their operations : from *the Dominator of Europe*,

“ —————bloody,

“ Sudden, malicious, smacking of ev'ry sin,

“ That has a name, ————”

hostilities, without any of the chivalry of the past, have assumed a malignity, which condescends to any baseness, that subtilty can invent, for obtaining its ruinous purpose. During former wars, both Scotland, and Ireland, from the feebleness of their means, to meet difficulties, were much more distressed than England : during the present hostilities, Scotland, and Ireland, from augmented resources, have been very little affected, by the power, or the artifices, of such an enemy, as we have just seen. In former wars, as we have remarked, commerce was pressed down, by the obstructions of hostility, to a given point, whence commerce always rose, in a  
contrary

contrary direction, till it became superior to its former elevation: in the present war, we may see something of the same principle, producing the same effects: but, in England, in Scotland, and in Ireland, from greater capitals, knowledge, and enterprise, they have carried on their over-sea trade, during the present war, beyond the brightest example of the most confirmed peace\*. And their commercial operations were carried on, in spite of the Berlin decree, and the malignant artifices, which continue to be connected with it. Here are the proofs: according to a three years average, ending with 1792, the value of foreign merchandize and colonial products, which were exported, from Ireland, amounted to - - - - - £. 65,943

And in the first year of the war of 1793, }  
such goods amounted only to - } 25,861

In 1806, the same cargoes amounted to	157,443
In 1807, D° - - - - -	150,370
In 1808, D° - - - - -	235,694
In 1809, D° - - - - -	<u>330,933</u>

By comparing the two periods together; by comparing the four years of war, under the effects of that decree, in respect to foreign merchandize, and colonial products, we see, by demonstration, that the over-sea commerce of Ireland, in those goods, has flourished, notwithstanding the Berlin decree. As

\* See before the Chronological Table; and the Shipping, and Cargoes of Ireland, before detailed, which furnish proofs of a prosperity, beyond that of her best times.

far, indeed, as England, Scotland, and Ireland, have been driven, by that decree, and by the concurrence of the United States, to rely, severally, on their own resources, they have been benefited by both\*. But, of this topic enough! We shall see hereinafter, demonstrations of the unexampled prosperity of the three united kingdoms of England, Scotland, and Ireland, during the present war, carried on, with aspect malign, against their manufactures, and trade, by the Dominator of Europe,

———“ the malicious foe that,  
 “ Envyng our happiness, and of his own  
 “ Despairing, seeks to work us woe, and shame.”

It is now time, according to the plan of this work, to estimate the losses of the commerce, belonging to Great Britain, from the war of 1803, thus malicious, in its purpose, yet inefficacious, in its effects. During the short, but captious peace, in 1802, the trade of Great Britain was quite unexampled, in its greatness. The first effects of hostilities, which were commenced, by the people, with alacrity, was to reduce the value of the cargoes exported, in 1802, from £46,120,962 to £.31,438,495, in 1803. The next effect was, to introduce into our carrying-trade 109,781 tons of foreign shipping. The third effect was, to lessen the British shipping, which were employed in our carrying-trade, 214,129 tons; many of which, however, may have been taken into the

\* It is stated, as a fact, that, in Ireland, there was sown, during the year 1806, as much flax seed, as would produce £.2,404,612 worth of flax. This shows what such a country as Ireland can do, when she trusts to her own resources.

service of the public, when they ceased to be employed by the individuals. Since the topick of employing foreign shipping is a point of national jealousy, it may be well to bestow on it a few remarks, in order to rectify that jealousy. Experience evinces that, in every war, Great Britain has employed many foreign ships, which are immediately discharged, on the return of peace. We have not employed so many foreign ships, in the present war, as in the former, by 93,136 tons ; the greatest number of foreign ships being employed, during the former war, in 1801, and the greatest, during the present, in 1809. During the year of peace, 1802, the epoch of the greatest prosperity, that had then been known, there were employed of foreign ships 767,816 tons : the year 1809 was an epoch of still greater trade, in this country, yet there were only employed 674,680, in this year, being an augmentation, in the seventh year of the war, of 239,253 tons, while there was a considerable augmentation of British shipping : But, it was an epoch of the greatest exportation, that this country had ever known. After this exposition, we may perceive, that there is nothing, in the topick of foreign shipping, which required any particular remark, in our public councils ; as what happened now had happened before ; and will again happen\*.

It may be now proper to indulge, in a remark, or two, on the fortune of our trade. The defalcation of our exports, in 1803, was very great, beyond all experience : yet, they recovered, considerably, in

\* See before the Chronological Table.



1804, when they were much greater than those of the year 1798. The exports of 1805 were still greater ; and were nearly equal to those of the year 1799. And our trade continuing to rise in its flow, the exports were still higher, in 1806, than they were in 1805, though they did not rise to the great amount of 1800, when the sum of our exports was £43,152,019. Such, then, is the vast force of the spring of our extensive commerce, which has a wonderful faculty, according to the language of Milton, "either state to bear, *prosperous*, or *adverse*."

But, a new event was at hand, which was intended to ruin, or regulate commerce. In November 1806, the dominator of Europe, mounting on the steeple of Berlin, that he might be heard, cried out, in a frantic voice : "The British isles are in a state of "blockade." Another dominator, in his day, during a prior age, commanded the tide to reflow : but, notwithstanding the command of Canute, the great, the tide continued to flow : and in spite of the dictation of Bonaparte, the great, our commerce continues ; our ships sail ; and our isles blockade the world. How much the trade of Scotland, and Ireland, have severally prospered, notwithstanding the Berlin decree, we have already seen. Let us now examine what commercial effects were the consequences of the Berlin decree, and the American non-importation. The amount of exports, in the years 1807, and 1808, were each a million of pounds of less value, than the amount of 1806, though they were about a million more than the value of exports, in 1798. The Berlin decree, and the American co-operation,

co-operation, left Great Britain in possession of an outward commerce, amounting yearly to thirty-four million and a half, sterling value. The British Government issued orders of retaliation, and gave some facilities: the result at length was to send out cargoes, in 1809, of the custom-house value of £50,301,783, which were worth at least £.77,173,562. sterling money.\*

The usual prices of the public funds were higher in the end of the seventh year of this malignant war, than in the year of peace, before it began†. Never were there measures of such mighty portent, as the Berlin, and Milan decrees, so completely disappointed, in expected effect. But, neither the President of the United States, if he were free, nor the Dominator of Europe, if he were sane, are capable of judging, from the experience of the

\* The actual value of British produce and manufactures exported from Great Britain, in 1809, according to the prices current, amounted to £.50,242,761 sterling.

† See before the Chronological Table. The usual prices of the Public Funds, beginning with the year of peace, 1802, is an additional proof of the same important deduction.

					Bank Stock.	3 per C <sup>t</sup> . Con.
1802	(the average of the year)	-	-	-	186 $\frac{1}{2}$	70
1803	{ February	-	-	-	188	71 $\frac{7}{8}$
	{ November	-	-	-	142 $\frac{1}{2}$	53 $\frac{5}{8}$
1804	December	-	-	-	167 $\frac{1}{2}$	58 $\frac{1}{2}$
1805	November	-	-	-	193 $\frac{3}{8}$	60
1806	December	-	-	-	210 $\frac{1}{2}$	59 $\frac{1}{2}$
1807	November	-	-	-	225	63 $\frac{3}{8}$
1808	November	-	-	-	237	66 $\frac{1}{2}$
1809	{ January	-	-	-	239 $\frac{1}{2}$	
	{ December	-	-	-	278	70 $\frac{1}{2}$

past, or acting, from prescience of the future\*: they both continue to act, as if they conceived, like the great Canute, that they too could regulate the flux, and reflux of the ocean.

But, whatever may be the disappointments of our foemen, or the prosperity of the United Kingdom, we are not content. We complain, not so much of *want*, as of *deariness*. Yet, is there reason to fear, that *prosperity*, and *cheapness*, seldom accompany each other. These complaints are uttered, in various ways, and by very different persons. One of the most common complaints is *the depreciation of money*, or rather *the deariness of provisions*, and of *labour*. I have formerly discussed those points, as they appeared to me, during the dear years, that are past †. Considering the same topics, under dissimilar aspects, I am led to somewhat different conclusions. It may be much doubted, whether the *pound sterling*, or money of account, can depreciate; not being a coin, but a fictitious unit; neither, perhaps, can a guinea, being a coin, and passing, by weight, depreciate, though as bullion, it may sell, without the kingdom, at the market price of such a commodity. The *depreciation of money* is a com-

\* It is, at length, known, as a fact of great importance, that the commercial treaty, which was concluded, at Whitehall, in 1806, by M. Monroe, and Pinkney, was disallowed by Jefferson; because Bonaparte had declared, "that if the American Government should conclude a treaty with Great Britain, he would declare war against her, as an enemy." *Goldsmith's Exposition*. 5.


† See before p. 333—6, &c.

modious, but, not the true mode of speaking, on this difficult topick. The Secret Committee of the House of Commons, 1797, expressed the same idea more delicately, as well as more truly, when they spoke of “*the advanced price of labour, and of all “the necessaries of life, and almost every kind of commodity”*\*. It is not, then, that the *money unit*, or *pound sterling*, is depreciated, but, it is the necessaries of life, and almost every commodity, which have advanced in their prices. Neither is it logical to speak of a guinea being depreciated: a guinea, containing the same value of gold, the same quantity of alloy, and having the standard weight, must necessarily be the same: during the last twenty years, a guinea might not *go so far, in the market*; but, the gold is not depreciated, since it is rather more precious; and the necessaries of life have only advanced, in their prices. When we speak of rising, and falling; of depreciation, and advancement; we must have some *standard*, in our minds, from which any thing declines, or advances. The late Dr. Adam Smith considered the bushel of wheat, as the standard of values: the late Sir George Shuckburg, when he formed his celebrated table of appreciation, regarded the necessaries of life, as the proper standard of prices: and, undoubtedly, the physical necessaries are the appropriate standard of labour, and commodities. The money unit, or pound sterling, does not therefore decline from this standard; but, it is the prices of necessaries, which advance, from the money unit, or pound sterling.

\* Report X.



Yet, it may be asked, What are the causes of that advance? The chief causes are the prosperity, the opulence, and freedom of the country : prosperity produces wealth, and freedom allows every one to spend, what he had acquired, either by his industry, or his good fortune. During the *dear years* of *recent times*, the high prices were attributed to the Bank paper. When this point was under consideration in 1804, the abstract assertion was regarded, as obviously unfounded : it was allowed, indeed, that the Bank paper promotes industry, and commerce and circulation ; that all those create wealth ; that riches beget luxury ; that luxury induces consumption ; and consumption, by augmenting the demand, necessarily tends to raise the prices of labour and commodities : and, the outcry, then is, that we are an enterprising, commercial, money-making, and free-spending people. Thus, is the Bank of England, like the heart, in the animal economy, the vital receptacle, which constantly receives, and throws out, the circulating fluid, that energizes our whole commercial system : it may truly be said, that, if it were not for the Bank discounts, we should hardly have those good things, for which we are envied, our *ships, commerce, and colonies* ; and for which our trade is obstructed every where, under the dominator of Europe, in the true spirit of the fox, which derided the grapes, that he could not reach. In this large view of the subject, the misfortune is, that *great prosperity, and low prices*, scarcely ever exist together.



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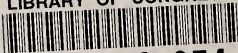








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